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THE NEW YORKER

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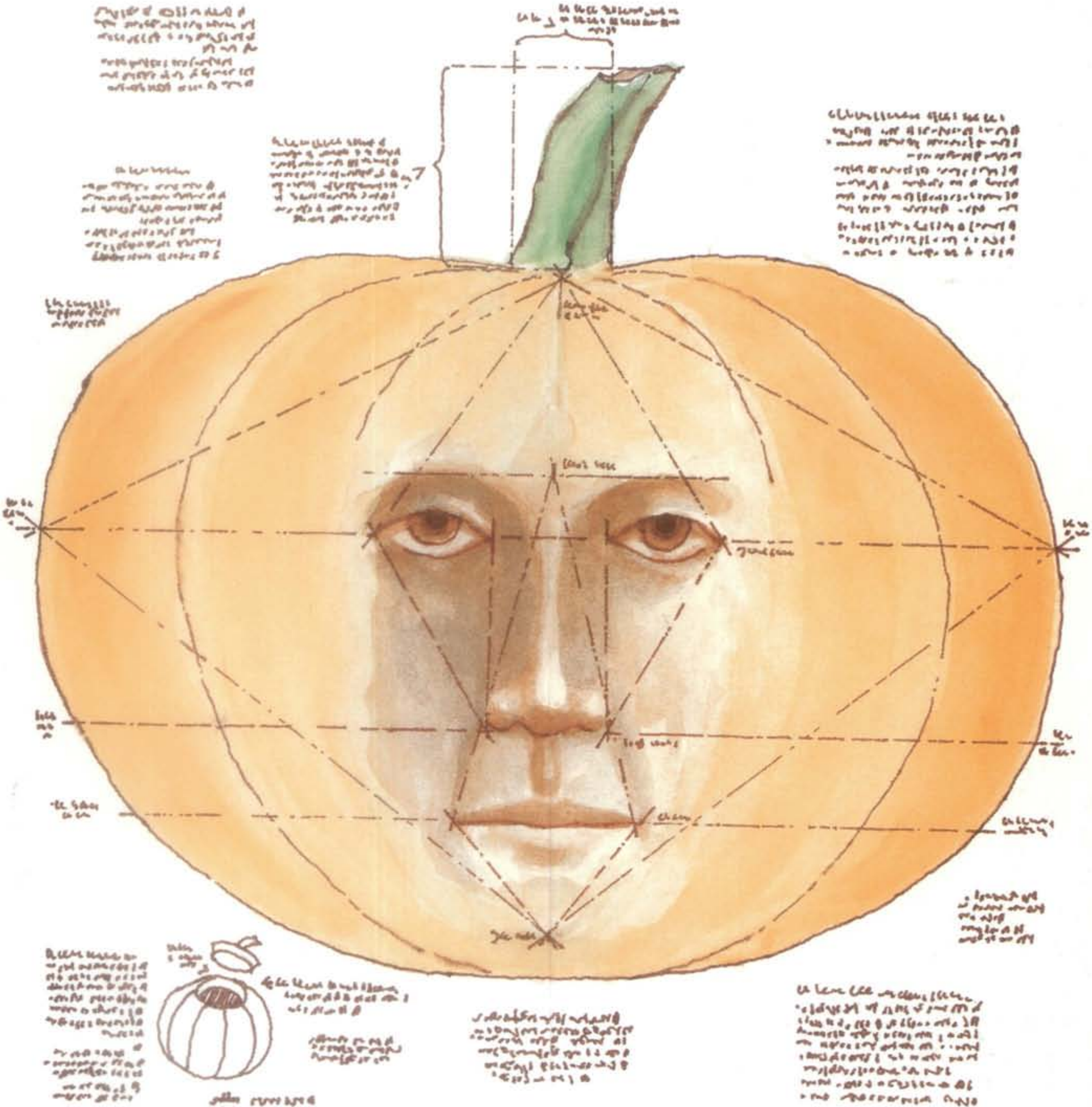

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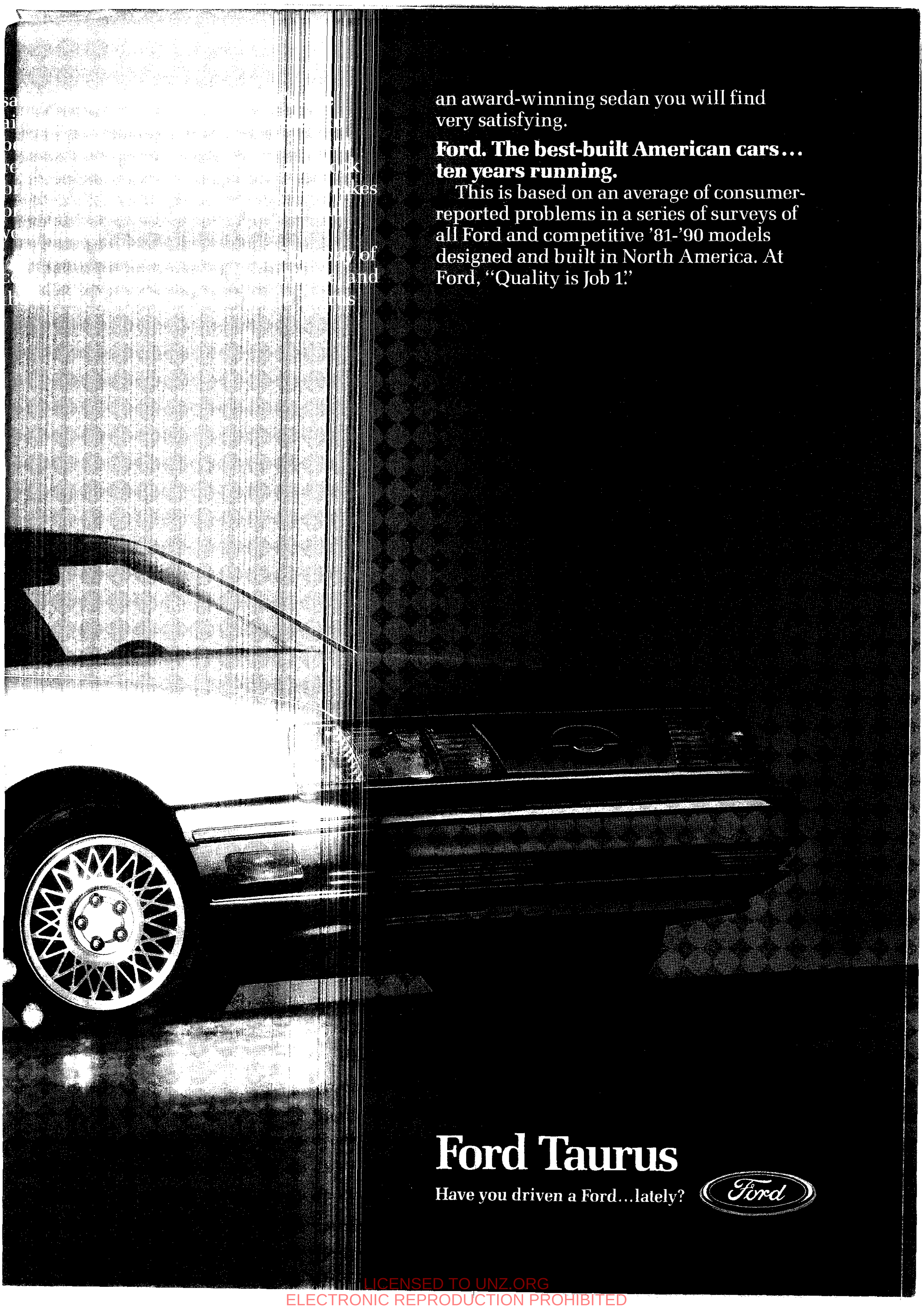

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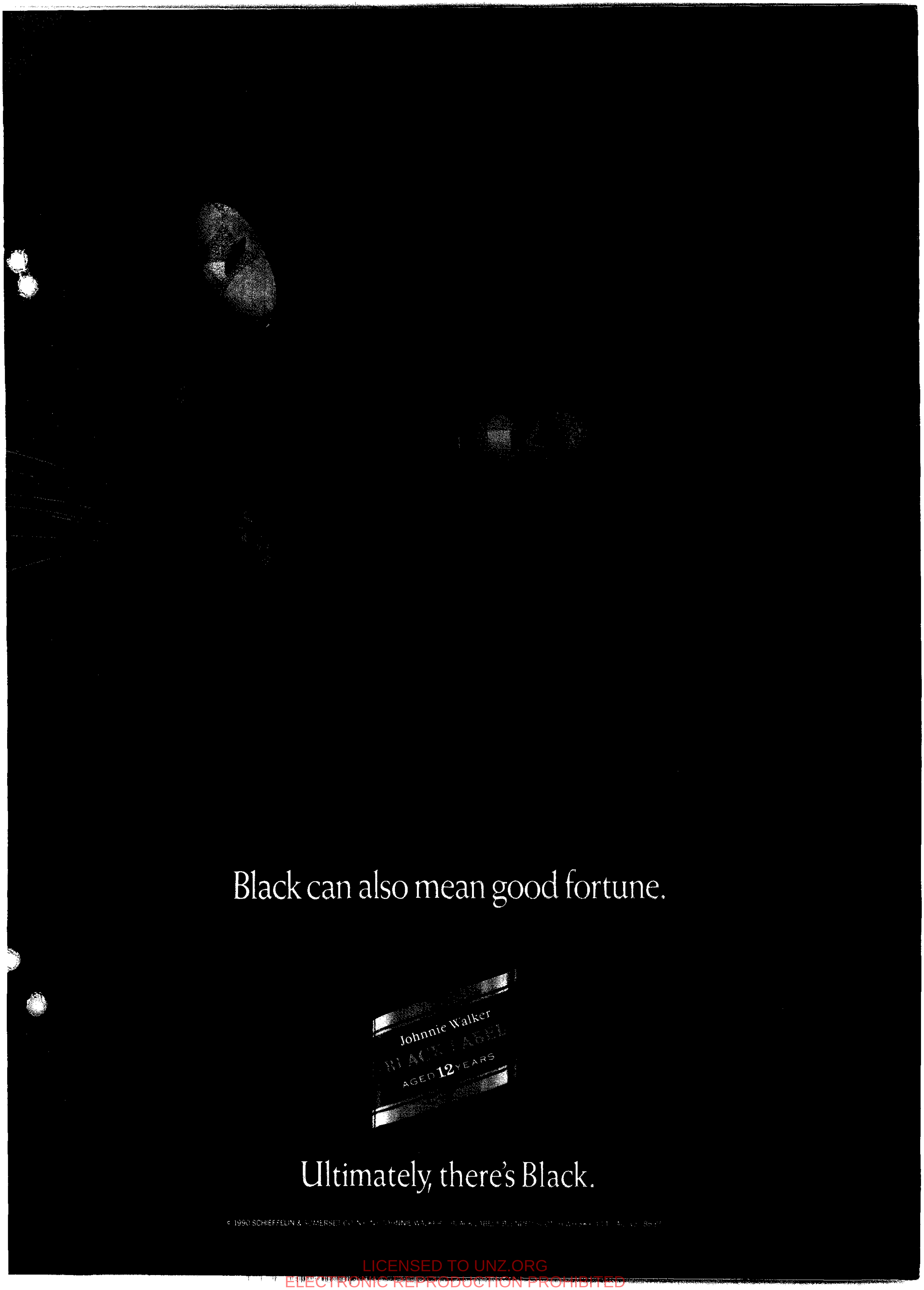
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

EVERYWHERE over the past year, classic plays have taken on new meanings because of events in Eastern Europe. Romania's Bulandra Theatre, for example, recently brought to the West a prophetic 1985 production of "Hamlet" that featured the country's most prominent actor, Ion Caramitru, and presented the work pointedly as an allegory of a corrosive regime and its dissolution. Plays classified as "absurd" have also served as commentary on today's political and cultural ferment. This is more than a matter of great works' openness to contemporary visions. It is poetic justice: plays written in the late forties and early fifties, before the raising of the Wall and after the falling of the Bomb, are being revived just as the former symbol, at least, has crumbled.

Eugene Ionesco's "Rhinoceros," with its overt allegorical elements, is the most obvious fodder for revisionism. (Oddly, its latest incarnation is a relatively frivolous Peter Hall-directed musical called "Born Again," starring Mandy Patinkin, in which the action is transplanted from a small French town to a California shopping mall.) Ionesco's earlier plays, however, the so-called "tragic farces," are also acquiring unexpected overtones, sometimes subtle ones. The Ubu Rep's production of "The Chairs," for instance (directed by Françoise Kourilsky; through October 28), is in most respects conventional, emphasizing the play's comic, metaphysical qualities. This story of a nonagenarian couple and their procession of invisible visitors is more a study of the dislocations of aging than an occasion for political comment. And yet the play now seems to be as much about the selectiveness of historical memory as about loneliness. The main characters—played professionally by Clement Fowler and Elizabeth Perry—have lived so long with certain versions of the past that they have only to utter a word or syllable for whole half-truths to arise before them. They enjoy a relative degree of freedom, yes; but they must also, as the play spins in Keystone Cops fashion to its conclusion, contend with the depression caused by a swift turn in recent, initially joyous events.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

ABUNDANCE—Beth Henley's latest work, which is set in nineteenth-century Wyoming. With Tess Harper and Amanda Plummer. Previews through Oct. 28. Opens Oct. 30 at 8. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

BUDDY: THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY—Paul Hipp is the legendary singer in this musical imported from the West End. Directed by Rob Bettinson, the show was written by Alan Janes. The songs are Holly's. In previews. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

GONZA THE LANCER—A play by the eighteenth-century author Chikamatsu Monzaemon; translated from the Japanese by Donald Keene and directed by David Greenspan. Opens Oct. 23 at 6:45. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

KING LEAR—Hal Holbrook has the title role in this production of Shakespeare's tragedy, which was directed by Gerald Freedman. In previews. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

OH, KAY!—David Merrick's new production of the Gershwins' 1926 musical comedy. The setting has been moved from Long Island to Harlem, and James Racheff has written a new book, based on the original by Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse. Angela Teek and Brian Mitchell lead the large cast; Dan Siretta directed. In previews. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

SPINOZA—A play by the Dutch dramatist Dimitri Frenkel. In previews. (Jewish Repertory Theatre, 344 E. 14th St. 505-2667.)

RECENTLY OPENED

ABOUT TIME and **HANDY DANDY**—James Whitmore and Audra Lindley in two plays in repertory. The first is by Tom Cole and the second is by William Gibson. ("About Time" was reviewed in our issue of 10/22/90.) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

ASPECTS OF LOVE—Andrew Lloyd Webber's latest extravaganza, based on David Garnett's frail 1955 novel of the same title, aspires to good taste and sophistication (it's about artists and theatre folk rather than cats or trains) but ends up being a monument to vulgarity. The combination of Garnett's triviality and Lloyd Webber's pretentiousness produces something so empty it implodes. (4/23/90) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

BIG, FAT, AND UGLY WITH A MOUSTACHE—A play by Christopher Widney, with Evan O'Meara, David Beach, Alison Martin, and Brian Howe. The director was Stone Widney. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 869-3530.)

BY AND FOR HAVEL—A pair of one-acters in revival. "By"—**AUDIENCE**—is based on an episode that occurred when Václav Havel had a menial job in a brewery; "for"—**CATASTROPHE**—is Samuel Beckett's poetic tribute to Havel when he was in prison. Together, they make an evening that is both comic and stirring. With Jerry Mayer and Lou Brockway. (3/19/90) (John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

CALVIN TRILLIN'S WORDS, NO MUSIC—The humorist as monologuist. Starting out with such homely matters as food and family, Mr. Trillin manages to sharply nick many issues—social and political—on both sides of the Atlantic, without ever changing his offhand manner (or moral stance) or raising his voice. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074. Closes Oct. 28.)

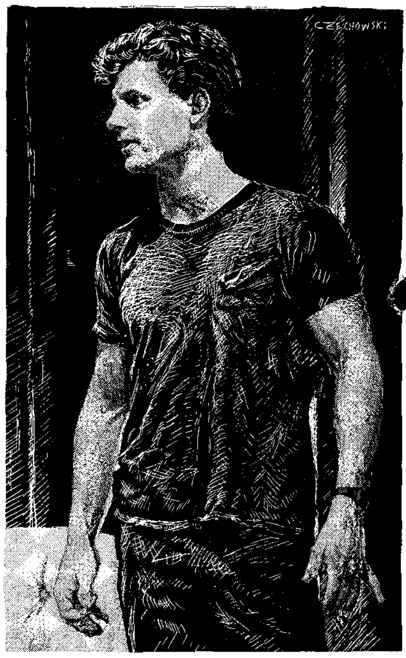
CAMILLE, A TEARJERKER—Everett Quinton and Charles Ludlam are both at their best in this revival of Mr. Ludlam's 1973 spoof, which gives Mr. Quinton a chance to "play the whore" on a grand scale. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

THE CHAIRS—Ionesco's play, presented by the Ubu Repertory Theatre. (15 W. 28th St. 679-7562. Closes Oct. 28.)

CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—The first production of the season is **THE COLORADO CATECHISM**, a play by Vincent J. Cardinal. With Becky Ann Baker and Kevin James O'Connor. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

FALSETTOLAND—This latest installment of a three-part cantata by William Finn (music and lyrics) is a sequel to "In Trousers" and "March of the Falsettos." Mr. Finn's story presents a number of new elements (among them a bar mitzvah in the hospital room of a man who is dying of AIDS) before dissolving in its own syrup. The music sounds agreeable enough, and the performance goes smoothly, under the direction of James Lapine. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

FOREVER PLAID—Stuart Ross's loving, tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. The performances of Jason Graae, Stan Chandler, David Engel, and Guy Stroman (as the Plaids, a close-harmony group snuffed out in the prime of life and brought back to earth for a single evening) are so deadpan, and the songs (arranged by James Raitt) are rendered at such a heightened pitch of musical good faith, that only from Ross's script and choreography would you know the thing is a parody. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)



Tony Goldwyn in "The Sum of Us"

HAPPY DAYS—Charlotte Rae and Bill Moor in a revival of Beckett's play. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes Nov. 11.)

JACKIE MASON: BRAND NEW—The comedian brings his act to Broadway again. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

LETTICE & LOVAGE—The marvellous Maggie Smith plays Lettice Douffet, a freewheeling guide to England's stately homes, and the elegant Margaret Tyzack plays a reprimanding envoy sent by Lettice's employers in Peter Shaffer's merry comedy about an unlikely friendship and other matters. Paxton Whitehead and Bette Henritze are effective in supporting roles. Michael Blakemore was the director. (4/9/90) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

MACHINAL—A revival of Sophie Treadwell's 1928 play. Directed by Michael Greif. With John Seitz, Marge Redmond, and Jodie Markell. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

MEASURE FOR MEASURE—The Pearl Theatre Company's production of Shakespeare's play. (Pearl Theatre, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708. Closes Nov. 3.)

MICHAEL FEINSTEIN IN CONCERT: PIANO AND VOICE—Mr. Feinstein in a limited engagement that runs through Oct. 27. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE MISER—Philip Bosco, Carole Shelley, and Mia Dillon have the leads in Molière's comedy. Directed by Stephen Porter. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square, 50th [illegible]. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." Seen last spring at Playwrights Horizons, the show has moved to Broadway. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE PIANO LESSON—August Wilson's newest drama, the fourth in his series chronicling the black-American experience in the twentieth century, is set in Pittsburgh in 1936. In its exquisite writing and over-all structure (involving the conflict over a piano that figures hauntingly and intricately in one family's history) the play resembles "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" more than "Fences." Wilson takes refuge in an overly mystical and melodramatic ending, but there are some great scenes—even if the subtle ensemble

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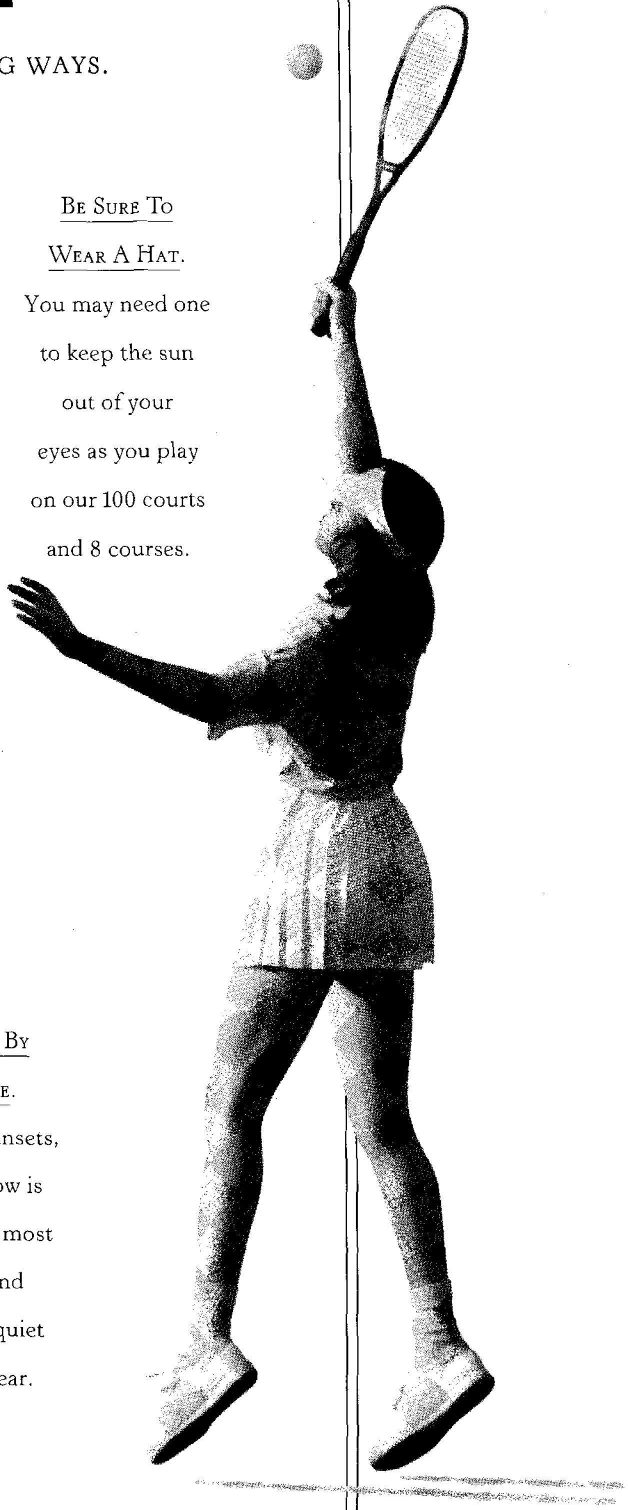

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

acting in Lloyd Richards' production is thrown out of balance by an excessive performance by Charles S. Dutton. (4/30/90) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

Prelude to a Kiss—Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. Barnard Hughes is the old man, Susan Gabriel is the bride, and John Dossett is the groom. (3/26/90) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

The Rothschilds—A revival of the 1970 musical by Jerry Bock (score), Sheldon Harnick (lyrics), and Sherman Yellen (book). (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

Six Degrees of Separation—You're best off knowing nothing about the new John Guare play, other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright and the director, Jerry Zaks. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. What more do you want? With Swoosie Kurtz and Courtney B. Vance. (6/25/90) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Moves upstairs to the Vivian Beaumont starting Oct. 30. Stockard Channing rejoins the cast on this date, replacing Miss Kurtz.)

Smoke on the Mountain—This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray (who also performs, along with six other versatile actor-musicians), it re-creates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of more or less devout gospel singers have been invited to appear. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Sum of Us—Tony Goldwyn and Richard Venture star in a play by David Stevens. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Tartuffe—Molière's comedy, presented by the Willow Cabin Theatre Company. (TaDa! Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 886-1889. Closes Oct. 28.)

Twelfth Night—Shakespeare's comedy, presented by the Riverside Shakespeare Company. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 369-2273.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while La Vern Baker, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular setting and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run celebrated its thirtieth birthday last May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **A FEW GOOD MEN:** "Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series. Directed by Don Scardino. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1990:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **GYPSY:** This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful—and the cast so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). With Linda Lavin. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

DANCE

THE fondly remembered James Waring, who died in 1975, was a Renaissance man without a Renaissance. He taught dance, choreographed, wrote (he was an inveterate punster), directed plays, made collages, designed and hand-sewed elaborate costumes, and regularly discovered fresh theatrical talent. All of this would be fit in around regular jobs at irregular hours, like his graveyard shift in the mailroom of *Time*, after which Waring would bolt down some coffee and head over to a class at the School of American Ballet.

Waring is always included in discussions of the Judson Dance Theatre's early years, even though his passions for classical dancing and for dressing up onstage contravene everything one associates with Judson. He also moved easily among ballet dancers, making a pas de deux for Bruce Marks and Toni Lander, proposing ballets to Robert Joffrey, supplying a repertory for little companies downtown; yet he never worked with the big companies on a steady basis. Perhaps his oscillation between several styles was related to his fundamental aesthetic outlook. "The valid and eternal things in theater are movement, sound, light, and delight," he once wrote. "The feelings of the audience are unpredictable, but we hope for joy as well as horror."

On October 25-27, Judson will stage a concert of Waring's dances as part of its centennial celebrations. The evening has been organized by the dancer Richard Colton, a former Waring student, and by David Vaughan, a writer, occasional performer, and Mr. Waring's classmate at S.A.B. in the nineteen-fifties. The program will include performances by Ronald Dabney, in "Feathers" (a solo about the female impersonator Babette), and by Teri Weksler, in "32 Variations in C Minor," to music by Beethoven.

Georgian State Dance Company—A folk-dance troupe. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Oct. 23, Oct. 25-26, and Oct. 30, al[illegible] 8; Oct. 24, Oct. 27, and Oct. 31 at 2 and 8, and Oct. 28 at 3. Through Nov. 4.)

Jennifer Muller/The Works—In a one-week engagement that will include the premières of "Refracted Light" and "Righteous About Passing (on the Left)." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 23-27 at 8 and Oct. 28 at 2 and 7:30.)

James Waring Dance Retrospective—"Scintilla," "Rose," "Feathers," "32 Variations in C Minor," "An Eccentric Beauty, Revisited," and "Phantom of the Opera." (Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Sq. S. 777-0033. Oct. 25-27 at 8.)

Rebecca Kelly Dance Company—Presenting "Yellow Stone" (première), "Arbitra" (American première), and other works. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Oct. 25-26 at 8 and Oct. 27 at 2 and 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

WE'RE not about to climb out on a limb and say that New York is some kind of blues mecca, but lately this ancient American vernacular has been asserting itself here more forcefully than usual. Exhibit A: the third annual Benson & Hedges blues festival, featuring such luminaries as John Lee Hooker and Albert Collins, just swept through town. Exhibit B: Manny's Car Wash, an Upper East Side club that opened earlier this year, has been steadily attracting some big-name bluesmen and women. Exhibit C: Tramps, in its expanded Chelsea format, has been doing the same (though it does not think of itself as strictly a blues joint). Now along comes Exhibit D, the Abilene Café, a nothing-but-blues club on Eighth Avenue just below 14th Street, which opened its doors a few weeks ago. Like Tramps, the Abilene is a reincarnation: it led a fairly low-profile first life in the East Twenties until 1987, when it fell prey to the kind of financial troubles that prove to be so many clubs' undoing. We visited the Abilene's new home on a recent weeknight, and found it to be spacious, cheerful, and as plain as a brown paper bag: some painted brick, a couple of posters, functional furnishings. The staff, eager to attract a clientele, did everything but shine our shoes, and the band onstage, Timothea and the Po' Boys, played a competent, energetic set that included such "you know the words" crowd-pleasers as "Feelin' Alright?" and "Don't Play That Song." The club won't win any prizes for atmosphere, but it does have the earmarks of a good blues bar: inexpensive food, a modest cover charge, and an unpretentious crowd. Blues fans, who are often given to gloomy predictions about their art form's survival, should be cheered by this latest addition.

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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Oak Room, which looks and sounds a little bit better than when you last raised a glass here, is currently home to the regal torch singer **ANDREA MARCOVICCI.** Ms. Marcovicci began performing in the early seventies as a folksinger with a penchant for protest songs. ("I played the guitar, had a braid, a headband, and the whole works," she has said.) Since then, she's acted on stages and screens of various sizes, but most agree that she does her best work just sitting on top of a piano and singing about love. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

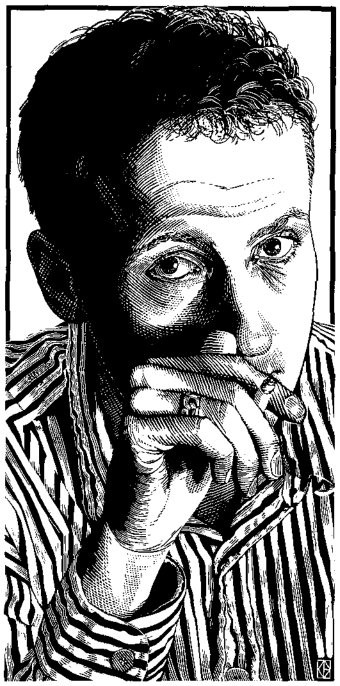
Apollo, 253 W. 125th St. (864-0372)—On Wednesdays, the theatre presents Amateur Night, a continuation of the legendary show that has launched the careers of such performers as Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Billie Holiday. Vocalists, dancers, musicians, and comedians participate. It's a chance to file away a memory for a later "I knew him/her when." Show time is seven-thirty.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea. The perennially coy and campy **EARTHA KITT,** who sings, and occasionally growls, about such things as sex and money, is in swing for the next few weeks. Dining.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. The **BERTHA HOPE** quartet comes in Oct. 24; **JUDY NIEMACK** leads a quartet of her own Oct. 25; and saxophonist **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN** brings in a quintet Oct. 26-27. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists. It's an institution and it knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? **ELBA RAMALHO** performs Oct. 23-28; **CHICO HAMILTON** leads a trio Oct. 29; and **LOU RAWLS** starts up Oct. 30. Music from nine.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. Oct. 22-27 you can listen in on a trio consisting of saxophonist **GARY BARTZ,** pianist **GEORGE CABLES,** and bassist **IRA COLEMAN.** Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.



Bob Mould at the Marquee

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Through Oct. 27, the pastel, uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **MONTGOMERY, PLANT & STRITCH,** a light, cool, breezily swinging trio that formed in Houston in 1983. Their tunes are mostly American-songdom standards, but they breathe new life into them with surprising arrangements and inventive, difficult harmonies. **BOBBY SHORT** begins his fall session on Oct. 30. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans' Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano through Oct. 27; **BARBARA CARROLL** begins work Oct. 30. Music from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club, a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti, is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. The *College Music Journal* hosts one of its Music Marathons here (and at other clubs around town) Oct. 24-27. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A pleasant hangout for white-collar trash, where you'll find cold Dixie beer, collard greens, and plenty of men who know how to wear a leather vest. As if that weren't enough, the bar-and-restaurant also features a corrugated-tin ceiling and a truckload of sort-of-Southern items: a photo booth, a giant Amoco sign, an Evel Knievel lunchbox. Most nights, the buffet turns into a bandstand at nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—An Irish bar, way out on the Western edge of town, where the great potholed boulevards turn to cobblestones, and the world across the Hudson flashes its come-hither signs. The back room has Hibernian sounds on Fridays. **LOST AND FOUND** performs on Oct. 27. Sets begin at nine.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. **ANITA O'DAY,** whose stints here are semi-regular, is singing those old Gene Krupa arrangements Oct. 23-28; the **GEORGE COLEMAN** quartet begins a week-long gig on Oct. 30. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—With jazz you get eggroll. At this posh-looking two-floor Chinese restaurant, tucked into a midtown skyscraper, you'll find a lot of businessmen and a lot of hanging plants. In the middle of the main dining room, you'll also find a Steinway grand, which belongs to **ADAM MAKOWICZ** Oct. 23-28. Pianist **JUNIOR MANCE** and bassist **MARTY RIVERA** take over beginning Oct. 30. Music starts at eight Monday through Saturday, and at seven on Sunday.

Gonzalez y Gonzalez, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big—de rigueur for the lower-Broadway dining scene. The theme is, of course, Mexican, and you get the whole enchilada—a giant cactus here, a parade-float sombrero there, animal skulls, religious artifacts, and red-chili clusters everywhere. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—This is such a gorgeous, thirties-ish movie set of a place that you expect gunmen to burst in at any moment. The restaurant-bar—forested and twilit—is about the size of a football field, with the piano at the fifty-yard line. If your seats are good enough, you'll hear some able entertainers, including Andy Laverne Oct. 22-23; Hal Schaefer (playing solo Oct. 24-25, and in a duo Oct. 26-27); and Billy Marcus Oct. 29-31.

Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A modernist night spot in the basement of the Hotel Edison. There's a glass-brick reception area, an oval blond-wood bar, and other interior-design novelties. The lighting—blue neon, in laserlike strips and wide halos—works on the eyes like a long day in front of the PC. The Bob Mullenhoff trio will be heard here Oct. 25.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An unpretentious second-floor jazz retreat. Some upcoming events: Andy Tuck on Oct. 23; the Mike Renzi trio on Oct. 24; Madeleine Kole, with the Richie Iacona trio, performing Cole Porter on Oct. 25; Loren Schoenberg's big band on Oct. 26; the Mike Rabinowitz quartet on Oct. 27; Pete Malinverni on Oct. 29; and Bill Wurtzel and Howard Morgan on Oct. 30.

Kilimanjaro, 531 W. 19th St. (627-2333)—The northern branch of the popular Washington, D.C., night spot. As the name suggests, African music is the sine qua non, be it live or d.j.-spun. Calypso, reggae, and world-beat formats also turn up; in any case, the huge dance floor seldom lies fallow.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music-and-performance space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. Guitarist **BILL FRISELL'S** band will be here Oct. 26-28. Music after nine.

Lauterbach's Brooklyn Beat, 335 Prospect Ave., at Sixth Ave., Brooklyn. (1-718 788-9140)—A grungy but well-intentioned watering hole devoted to homegrown Brooklyn bands. The emphasis here is on exposed cement, although one wall is decorated with Polaroids—"St. Patty's 1986" (people in green hats and leis), "New Year's 1988-89" (people in red hats and leis). Lauterbach's microwave menu includes shepherd's pie and chicken parmigiana, but the musical menu is almost always a better bet.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant-and-bar featuring a load of snazzy Gibson guitars, some Washington Square-style portraits of folks like Bo Diddley and Dr. John, and funky French fry–potato chip hybrids. A bleary-eyed patron here was recently heard remarking, "I don't know about you people, but I'm feeling a lot of love in this room." The **GEAR DADDIES** will be here Oct. 25, sharing the bill with **RAW YOUTH.** Music after nine. Dining.

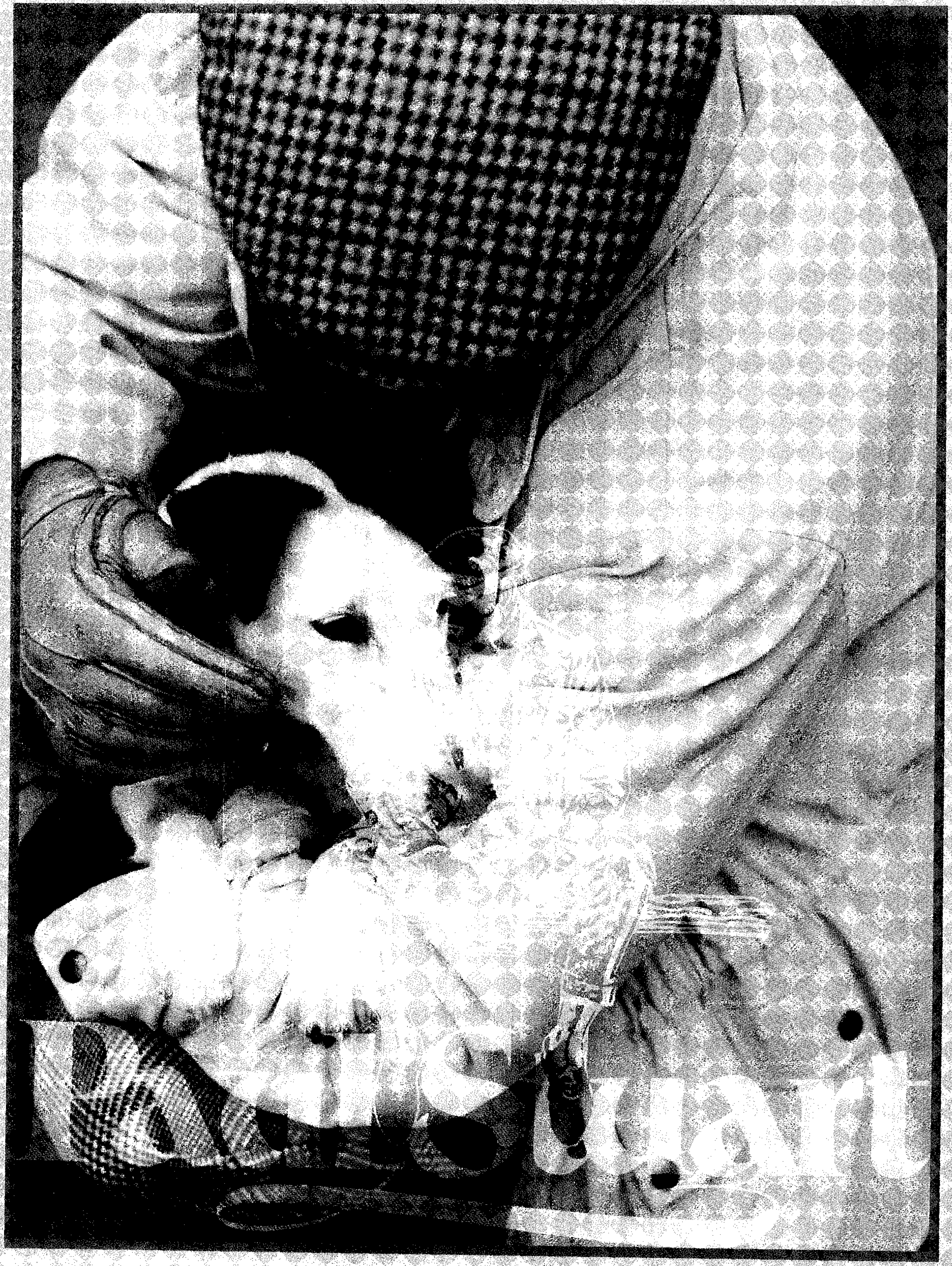
Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest below-stairs room that looks like a slightly spruced-up tenement-building apartment. There's cheap Ecuadoran food, a greater-East Village crowd, and, every Monday night, **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mix of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, the Velvets, and various pop curiosities. Sets from ten-thirty.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A recent addition to the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar.

Marquee, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A rock club just off the West Side Highway (and no relation to the famed London venue). Last year, **BOB MOULD,** the former Hüsker Dü chieftain who'll be here Oct. 26-27, surprised a lot of people with a four-star solo album that was, for the most part, thoughtful and melodic. Mould now seems to have returned from his introspective bender. His latest effort, "Black Sheets of Rain," is, as he himself puts it, "pretty unholy loud."

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the second set will need all their Scout training to get home, but the smell of the nearby Maxwell House coffee factory might give them a boost.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and high-heeled ladies. It's not always easy to detect the music over the babble, but if you listen closely you should be able to hear **IAN WHITCOMB** (who describes himself as "an English gentleman gone bad") meander the byways of Tin Pan Alley in his revue, "Irving Berlin and Ragtime America," abetted by pianist **TERRY WALDO.** They'll be on hand Oct. 23-27, followed by **SYLVIA SYMS** beginning Oct. 30. Dining. Closed Sundays.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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A lofty (and loftily priced) room whose bookings vary between straight-ahead cabaret and kitsch. Luckily, singer **JULIE WILSON,** with her wonderfully dark, gravelly voice and her well-known affection for American songwriters, is in residence just now. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. When the band is swinging, and you and your dreamboat are cheek to cheek, everything can seem just swell. Mondays and Tuesdays are the property of **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** a band that relies on period instruments, old-fashioned felt-bannered music stands, and original-score arrangements to re-create the look and sound of a thirties swing outfit. Fridays belong to Rick Hardeman and the Basin Street Six, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Music begins at six on Sundays, at eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and at nine Fridays and Saturdays.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—There's usually a good reason to go the Ritz, but there's almost always a better reason to stay away. Even leaving aside its midtown address—the sort of neighborhood you wake up in after you've been kidnapped—there's still the club's distressing pack-them-in, get-them-the-hell-out management tactics, and the fact that the atmosphere here, on any given night, is something between those of a high-school gym class and a police state. The **SOUP DRAGONS,** who, at this writing, are poised atop the college charts, will be here Oct. 24; with them will be **24-7 SPYZ,** a ferocious rock band whose shows are chaotic, high-decibel, and often indecipherable jams accompanied by a good deal of stage diving and slam dancing. The Dublin-based band **AN EMOTIONAL FISH,** which will perform on a mixed bill here Oct. 26, surfaced not long ago with some singles on U2's independent label, Mother Records. (Hothouse Flowers were the last valedictorians of that finishing school.) The band, which has just released its début album, plays a sardonic rock that's alternatively moody and fierce, and that calls to mind David Bowie, as well as U2 itself. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. For the next couple of weeks, the place belongs to an all-star outfit that includes **BOBBY HUTCHERSON, CEDAR WALTON,** and **STEVE TURRÉ,** among others. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Sweetwaters, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the table, shrimp creole on the menu, a sunken dance floor with a "Saturday Night Fever" ball, and a house photographer who offers to take a picture of you and your date. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and R. & B. acts. There's a lively bar, too, separated from the dining room by tinted glass.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that has become an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, indoor miniature golf, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is slicker than the original Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. The seminal reggae outfit **TOOTS & THE MAYTALS** comes in Oct. 25-27.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia, but the music is anything but stale. The exceptional (and exceptionally young) trumpeter **ROY HARGROVE** leads a quintet here through Oct. 28. Mondays are reserved for the late Mel Lewis's big band. Music after ten.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—**TIMOTHY LEARY** does some "standup philosophy" Oct. 28, and singer-pianist-accordionist **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE** comes in Oct. 31. Ms. Légère's campy, over-the-top shows are part Jerry Lee Lewis and part Edith Piaf. She puts a tiny, yodelling yelp at the end of most lyrics and she flits crazily about the stage like someone dancing alone in the corner of a bar. What's wonderful and surprising about Légère's act, though, is that it's not just for performance-art kicks. When push comes to shove, Légère—whom we last saw wearing a sequinned miniskirt with an American flag sewn into the seat—can really sing and play piano.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. **HILTON RUIZ** will lead a trio here through Oct. 27. Music from eight weeknights and Sundays from seven.

"Macbeth" at the Next Wave Festival

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Next Wave Festival—The Ninagawa Company from Japan in its production of "Macbeth." (Oct. 22-23 at 8, Oct. 24 at 11 A.M. and 8, and Oct. 25-26 at 8.) . . . ¶ "Polygraph," a play written by Robert Lepage and Marie Brassard, and directed by Mr. Lepage. (Oct. 23 at 7, Oct. 24-27 at 8, and Oct. 28 at 3.) . . . ¶ Carbone 14, a twelve-member group from Montreal, in a dance-theatre work called "Le Dortoir." (Oct. 30 at 7 and Oct. 31 at 8. Through Nov. 4.) (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. The festival continues through Dec. 9.)

Big Apple Circus—Opening night under the little big top is Oct. 25 in Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park. For ticket and schedule information, call 268-3030. Through Jan. 6.

Dancenoise—In a new work. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Oct. 25-28 at 8:30.)

Holly Hughes—In "World Without End." (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Oct. 25-27 at 9:30.)

Bongwater—Ann Magnuson's band, and Kramer, her friend. (Museum of Modern Art Auditorium, 11 W. 53rd St. Oct. 30 at 8. For information about tickets, call 708-9500.)

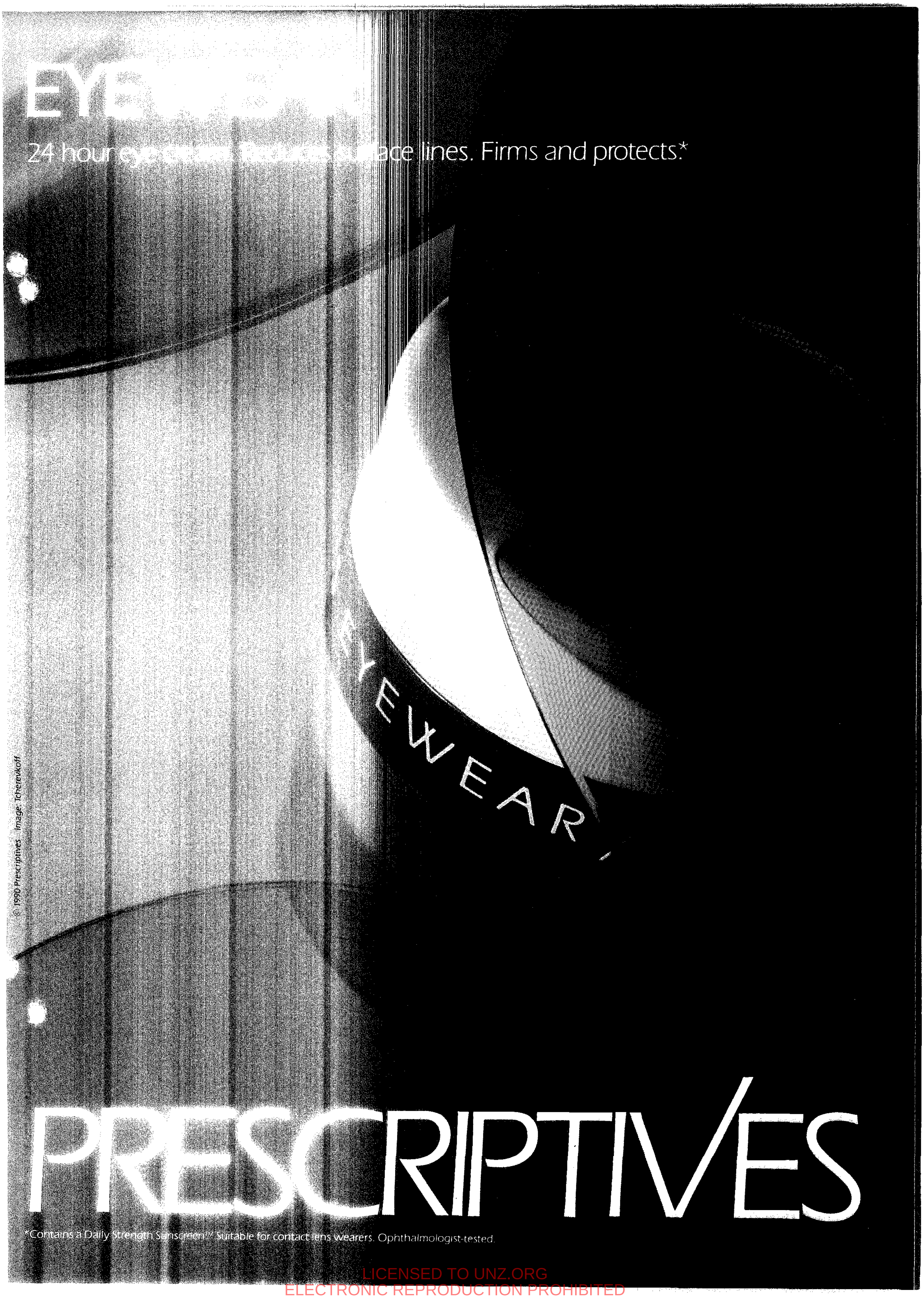
ART

ANN McCOY is an altogether outrageous mythologist. (Let's also try calling her a fervent as well as lapsed Roman Catholic, godde[illegible] worshipper, latter-day druid, and neo-symbolist.) Her most recent mythomaniacal efforts, on view at the Herstand gallery through November 3, are the result of her desire "to make sacred tubs dedicated to Aphrodite which could be used in a private sanctuary as a temple object by both men and women." These "Roman Works" are in fact a theatrically stunning group of cast-copper sculptures and giant watercolors that were created during the artist's yearlong residency at the American Academy in Rome, in 1989-90. Most are indeed life-size winged bathtubs, with inscriptions of hymns by the poet Sappho, and though the sculptures—at least for the purposes of this installation—have been filled with sand and other like substances, they could no doubt be used for ablutions as well. McCoy's high-flown theme was inspired in part by antiquities such as the tub in the Piazza Farnese Fountain, and in part by a dream of foreboding that she had a month before leaving for Rome. The dream takes place in a sanctuary. The morning of her arrival at the Academy, as McCoy explains in a catalogue essay that is itself quite an artifact, she "took a walk on the Via Dandolo . . . discovering, at the bottom of the Villa Sciarra, the Syrian Sanctuary, preserved like a bee in amber. Its general plan was exactly like the sanctuary of my dream." In the dream, she explains, she was "saved by bathing in the Eros principle."

The copper sculptures have an impersonal, imposing, rather Napoleonic allure, yet may also conjure thoughts of Joseph Beuys' sleds and honeypumps. McCoy's big watercolors suggest an iron butterfly's technique. While nothing if not distinct, they evoke a wild and woolly host of nineteenth-century greats and pretty-greats, ranging from Corot to Fernand Khnopff, from Edward Burne-Jones to Jules Bastien-Lepage.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The mega-exhibition of Mexican art titled "Splendors of Thirty Centuries" renews one's faith in the blockbuster. While one could justifiably take issue with reducing the achievements of the Olmecs to a few exquisitely grumpy statues, this is an epic display in the best Hollywood tradition: a drama that encompasses the history of a land and its people, their achievements and their startling ruptures, their colonization and subjugation, the overwhelming authority of the Church, and the impact of the alien concept of revolution. This nationalist travelogue begins with the extraordinary achievements of the pre-Columbians. A map of Teotihuacán



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ART—Cont'd

—a city whose wealth derived from obsidian trade—can transport one simply with its references to the Street of the Dead, the Plaza of the Moon, and the Pyramid of the Sun. Also on view are some of the most haunting figurative sculptures you are likely to see, from the Mayan city of Palenque, and exquisite jade and gold objects and astonishingly abstract sculptures of a shell and a feathered serpent from Tenochtitlán. The devastating impact of the Spanish conquest, the total break from the pre-Columbian world, is clearly demonstrated when the exhibition shifts abruptly to massive stone crosses and heavily embroidered vestments. For the centuries that followed the Spaniards' arrival, it seems as if all life were defined in terms of the Church. Room after room in the show is devoted to second-rate liturgical art in a gloppy, morose style; unfortunately, the more compelling folk-art traditions inspired by religious zeal receive little attention. It's not until the exhibition reaches this century that the painting gets interesting. Displays of the extraordinary range of Diego Rivera, and of the equally single-minded vision of his tormented wife, Frida Kahlo—and of many lesser-known figures—leave one hungry for more extensive exhibitions of their work. . . . ¶ "Wright of Derby," a retrospective of portraits, landscapes, and paintings with scientific themes by Joseph Wright (1734-97). Through Dec. 2. . . . ¶ Nineteen chalk-and-graphite drawings by John Singleton Copley (1738-1815). They are mostly studies for his enormous paintings, such as "The Ascension," "Siege of Gibraltar," and his portrait of John Adams. . . . ¶ "Glories of the Past" is an exhibtion of bronze and marble sculptures, vases, and jewelry made between 5000 B.C. and A.D. 800 that focusses on works from the Mediterranean and the Near East. . . . ¶ Eighteenth-century Italian drawings, including works by Francesco Guardi, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, and others. Through Dec. 9. . . . ¶ Fifteen American quilts and coverlets, made between 1803 and 1930, are on view. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture" is divided into four themes (graffiti, caricature, comics, advertising) and includes more than two hundred and fifty works. . . . ¶ A video installation by Gary Hill, consisting of body images displayed through several stripped cathode-ray tubes. . . . ¶ "First Light," a suite of twenty black-and-white etchings by James Turrell. Through Nov. 13. . . . ¶ "Diagramming Microchips" is a small exhibition of the large, colorful, computer-generated diagrams used to design microchips. Through Oct. 30. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn, 1991.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Mind Over Matter" attempts to delineate a youngish "third generation of idea-oriented" artists. Their works move away from what in today's climate may seem like the indulgences of commodification to an interest in socially relevant issues. The effort is laudable, the installation exquisite, the selections often quite thoughtful—but the show is a mess. It circles around some potentially interesting thoughts without ever taking off, largely because of the mediocrity of the work. Tishan Hsu's wheeled-and-tiled bathtubs are simply dreadful, and the often intriguing Liz Larner comes off here as a lightweight Bruce Nauman pretender. The work of the exceedingly intelligent Ronald Jones becomes more preposterous and inarticulate as time goes on. And Ashley Bickerton, who is usually clever, entertaining, and penetrating, has either become foolishly glib or is trying to work something out that does not yet belong on the walls of a museum. The one surprise of the exhibition is Nayland Blake, a young artist from San Francisco whose works have a poignant melancholy. However, his largest piece, which also forms the somewhat dramatic entryway to the show—a moody, vaporous portrayal of confused sexual identity—is formally familiar and gimmicky. Annette Lemieux comes off as the great poet here. Her works are both dreamy and critical, sophisticated and direct. But, all in all, the exhibition is more matter than mind. . . . ¶ Ninety-five paintings, constructions, and drawings by Burgoyne Diller (1906-65). Through Nov. 25. . . . ¶ Several animal sculptures from the museum's collection are on view in the lobby, including works by Hunt Diederich, Gaston Lachaise, and Alexander Calder. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A lobby installation by Joseph Kosuth, who has selected works from the museum's collection that at one time or another may have been deemed offensive. Through Dec. 3. . . . ¶ An exhibition of sixty paintings by Albert Pinkham Ryder (1846-1917). . . . ¶ "Milton Avery in Black and White" is a display of eighty drawings in pencil, ink, and crayon, made by Avery between 1929 and 1959. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ "Caribbean Festival Arts" presents costumes, masks, videotapes, music, and photographs related to the traditional celebrations of Jonkonnu, Carnival, and the Islamic Hosay. The thirty-six costume ensembles include materials such as mirrors, feathers, sequins, and beads, and range from human scale to sixteen feet tall. Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ Forty works of art from Oceania (mostly from the Sepik and Ramu river basins in New Guinea), including three-inch-long fish hooks, three monumental carved-wood "guardians," and a skull rack made of palm spathe, raffia, and bamboo. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

VERTIGO

Have you ever been in Grand Central Terminal and, looking up, seen someone walking across the enormous (sixty feet high, thirty-three feet wide) arched windows? There are catwalks traversing those windows, one on every floor, which the employees of Metro North, or the Tennis Club, or the Grand Uniform Co.—or any other business that has offices in the Terminal—use as corridors. But what corridors! Enter Grand Central Terminal at 15 or 25 Vanderbilt Avenue, to the far right or far left of the taxi stand, and go up the stairs, preferably to the fourth floor, where the view is best. The catwalks are sandwiched between two walls of windows: they're tunnels of glass. The floors and ceilings are a translucent, sea-green color, and the dozens of panes, which are fortified with chicken wire, open and close simultaneously with the turn of a gray steering wheel. Steel struts, chains, and pulleys seem to keep you aloft. From the fourth-floor catwalk you can see dark geometric shapes behind the arrivals-and-departures board. You can see the choreography of policemen on beats and commuters heading to work late. A breeze comes up into the catwalk from the avenue: you might have the sensation of flying.

For this ethereal view with a historical perspective, take a Friday-afternoon tour of Grand Central Terminal and its environs with Justin Ferate. (It meets at 12:30 in front of the Philip Morris Building.) Mr. Ferate is full of information, including the fact that, in the early years of television, when CBS broadcast from an office in the Terminal, the reception on New Yorkers' television screens would worsen every time a train pulled into the station.

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Court Arts of Indonesia" is a meticulously selected and exquisitely installed show, with just the right number of pieces to titillate but not overwhelm. Extraordinary detail abounds, especially in numerous ceremonial lances, which were symbolic expressions of power; very delicate gold jewelry; woven fabrics; and shadow puppets. There are also some curiosities, including a belt of human hair; a Javanese scroll depicting a royal procession, with a perspective that is part Eastern, part Western, and as wacky as Uccello; a golden skeleton; and a modesty plate, which is a kind of Indonesian fig leaf. Through Dec. 16. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—"The Eccentric Painters of Yangzhou" presents thirty works by eleven unorthodox, innovative artists who lived in Southern China in the eighteenth century. Through Dec. 15. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—Among the many strong works on paper here by Adolph Menzel (1815-1905) are a stunning, flesh-warm drawing of the Barberini Faun; deep platonic renderings of suits of armor; and a beautiful sketch, titled "Moltke's Binoculars," of leather long caressed and distressed. Through Nov. 18. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"A Day in the Warsaw Ghetto." Eighty-five photographs taken in September, 1941, by Heinz Jöst, who was a member of the German Army at the time. Through Nov. 1. . . . ¶ "Why I Got Into TV and Other Stories," a "mid-career" retrospective of Ilene Segalove's taped stories, radio programs, and photographic collages. Through Nov. 1. . . . ¶ A show of ten paintings and drawings, and a contemporary interpretation of a sukkah, or improvised shelter, by the artist Eli Content. Through Nov. 1. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Treasures of Eton College Library," a selection, from the five-hundred-and-fifty-year-old institution, of more than two hundred manuscripts, rare books, drawings, and watercolors. Included are the first edition of Thomas Gray's "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College" and the manuscript of "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." Through Nov. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

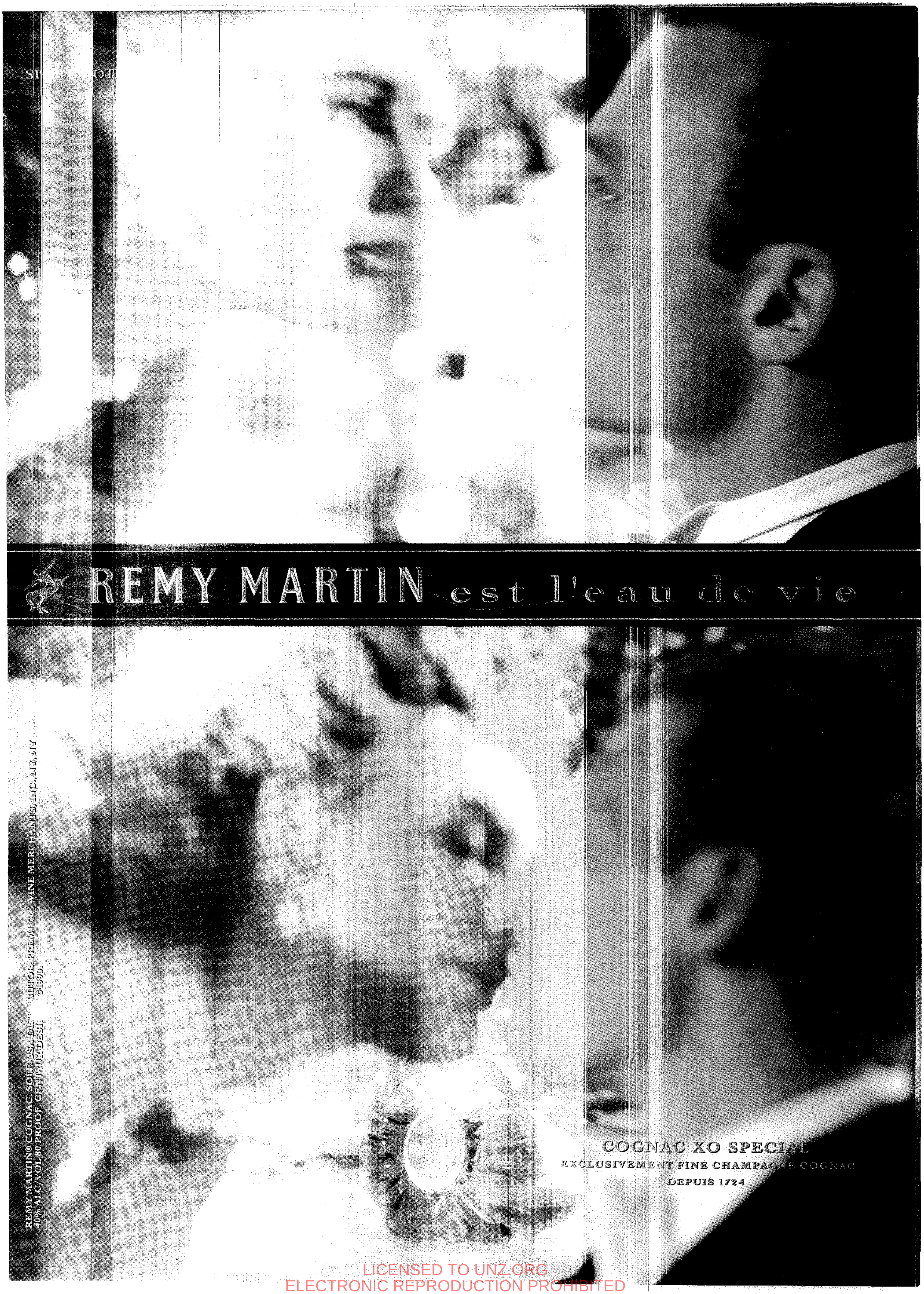
Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—Through maps, paintings, photographs, and prints, "Within Bohemia's Borders" documents the turbulent history of Greenwich Village from 1830 to 1930. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Oct. 26, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Women in Mexico" presents more than a hundred paintings, drawings, collages, and photographs by twenty-two Mexican women artists. Through Dec. 2. . . . ¶ A retrospective featuring fifty-nine works by Gari Melchers (1860-1932), including portraits, religious scenes, and landscapes. Through Nov. 4. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"From Receiver to Remote Control: The TV Set" features serpentine banks of virtually every TV model, from the first to the most current, and meticulously reconstructed period rooms that attempt to define a sociology of family life as it has revolved around the set. Through Nov. 25. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Manuscript fragments, letters, first editions, photographs, and illustrations are all part of "Charles Dickens: His Life and Work." (Berg Collection. Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

Queens Museum, Flushing Meadow Park—"Keith Haring: Future Primeval." The operative word in this survey of works from the first half of Haring's brief but loaded career is diversity. Even his earliest student works (1979) display a simultaneous interest in Expressionism and illustration, abstraction and representation, shock and fine design. In the mid-eighties, when he was a rising world-wide media star, Haring experimented with color, asymmetrical compositions, a more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scenelike narrative. These post-pictographic works are generally considered inferior, but the few included here are gems and suggest, as a show like this should but rarely does, that further study is in order. Through Nov. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5:30.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Home: Contemporary Urban Images by Black Photographers." More than ninety works by eleven photographers. Through Dec. 30. . . . ¶ Eighty contemporary works, including paintings, sculptures, photographs, musical instruments, and videotapes, make up "The Blues Aesthetic," a show that explores the impact of African-American culture on twentieth-century art. Through Dec. 30. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

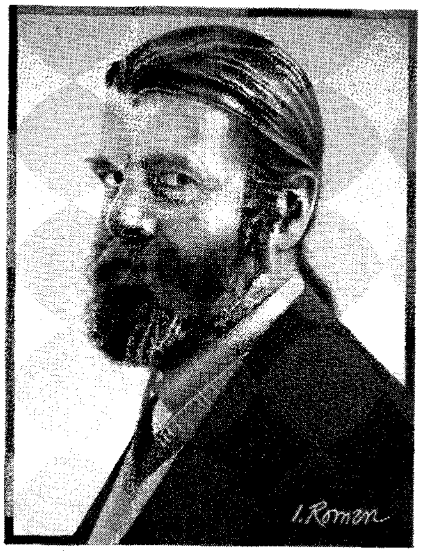
GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Arthur Dove (1880-1946) / **Joseph Stella** (1877-1946)—Eight fine paintings that emphasize the point that Dove's abstraction was always based on an intensely personal relationship with nature. Two of the works depict machinery, but even they seem to be more concerned with landscape than with technology. / Many of the one hundred drawings in this show are of flowers. They remind us that after the young Mondrian, nobody in this century could make a flower look as awkward, beautiful, and "primordial" as Stella did. Both shows through Nov. 17. (York, 21 E. 65th St.)

Carlo Maria Mariani—These works are typical of the artist's deliberately outdated neoclassical paintings, which are basically dull in composition, color, and surface. They depict the destruction of the ancient ideal of beauty by using modernist conceits—classical heads impaled on Duchamp's bottle rack, for example—that are very clever, too clever, it seems, to transcend a momentary joke. Although that may in fact be his point, the strategy drowns his obvious intelligence with common cynicism. Through Nov. 3. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Longo at Metro Pictures

Center for African Art—"Closeup." Presenting sculptures from two fine private collections with a concentration in Central African works, this exhibition is a treat, an illuminating lesson in looking at art. No other New York institution has done such a responsible job of challenging the very idea of art works and our relationship to them. The current exhibition takes a sort of double-reactionary approach to the art/artifact debate that the Center initiated so articulately several years ago. The objects are grouped according to such elements as "voids" and "scale" to draw attention to their abstract qualities, to encourage us to look at them as inventive sculptural works of art. Occasionally eyepieces are positioned to direct our gaze at parts of particular sculptures, and it is the utter sophistication of the works that comes through most clearly. In 1984, the Museum of Modern Art presented an exhibition whose purpose was to illustrate the influence of tribal art on modern painters; the show was much maligned for viewing the tribal work simply as fodder for the modernists. The brilliance of this exhibition is that it demonstrates in great detail and variety what artists like Picasso and Brancusi saw in the "primitive" world, and it does so in a delightfully inventive way—without including any Western works. Through March 24. (54 E. 68th St. Opens at noon on Sundays.)



Fred Sandback at Nolan

Mexican Art—Among the highlights in this fine selection from Olmec to contemporary times are Frida Kahlo's "Diego y Yo," a portrait of the artist with her husband, the philandering Diego Rivera, depicted in a pendant pinned to the long-suffering Kahlo's forehead. Her expression is a remarkable combination of fierceness and pain. There is a series of new monumental sculptures by Rufino Tamayo, as well as fine paintings by the creaturely surrealist Leonora Carrington and the modernist Carlos Mérida. There is also a section of a mural Rivera painted in 1933 for the New Workers' School, on Fourteenth Street. It is an excellent example of Mexican mural work—a group portrait of Communist and Socialist bigwigs, like Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky. Two American leftists hold a banner that reads "WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE," a directive the leaders themselves never heeded. Through Dec. 1. (Martin, 23 E. 73rd St.) . . . ¶ At CDS gallery, a similar list of twentieth-century Mexican masters is featured. There is a fine Cubist Rivera as well as a few good early works by Tamayo. But for the most part the works here are of lesser quality. Through Dec. 29. (13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—**fanny brennan,** Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 26); **christo,** Magidson, 1070 Madison Ave., at 81st St. (through Nov. 5); **adolph gottlieb,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Nov. 3); **františek kupka,** Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through Nov. 10); **kurt schwitters,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (through Nov. 24); **rhonda roland shearer,** Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through Nov. 9).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

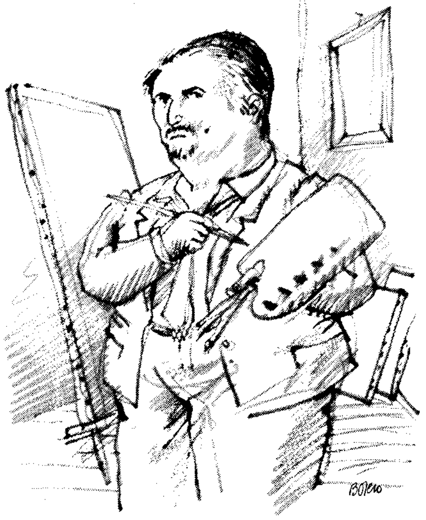
Ed Baynard—In the spirit of Morandi, this artist has devoted most of his career to painting pictures of bowls on shelves. His newest large watercolors, while certainly not on a par with the Italian artist's, are very finely designed. The silhouetted fifties bowls are done in gorgeous deep blues and reds, with intense Rothkoesque landscapes hanging above them. Through Oct. 27. (Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St.)

David Hendricks / **Billy Sullivan**—Effective realist landscapes that look like old-fashioned hand-tinted postcards. / A small show of this artist's characteristically whizzy, gestural pastels. Half of the works are of flowers—big juicy sunflowers, for the most part—in vases set on top of Afghani rugs, and in a sunny and sophisticated style that suggests a scatterbrained van Gogh with a life style to sustain. The others all have as their subject one raunchy, sour-looking, snake-hipped Big Apple Circus performer, and they are among Sullivan's more ambiguous and least likable pictures, which isn't necessarily a bad sign. Both shows through Oct. 27. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

John Hull—The small paintings and drawings on display here were produced last year when the painter was artist-in-residence for two weeks with the Louisville Redbirds. (The large paintings are more recent.) Baseball and art have never been happy bedfellows, but what makes these works interesting is that Hull has a very sophisticated sense of composition. He also has chosen not to deify these working-class heroes but to portray their moments of waiting, which sometimes seem to go on forever. Through Oct. 31. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

"Lynch to Lucier"—*An agreeable if silly group* show of work in mixed mediums by eight artists that seems to be proposing a spooky and metaphysical trend in art. The David Lynch painting suggests a Francis Bacon rendered by Lilliputians and Munchkins; Kiki Smith's paper work conveys an elegant and ghostly minimalism; Alvin Lucier's musical teapot is ineffably Pinteresque; and Hein Jacobs, a talented draughtsman, may actually make you think of the *scuola metafisica* of de Chirico et al. Through Oct. 27. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Short List—**jean arp,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 10); **georg baselitz,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 24) and 142 Greene St. (through Dec. 1); **hyman bloom,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 8); **fernando botero,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 24); **theophilus brown,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 14); **sam francis** and **friedel dzubas,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 3); **spencer frederick gore,** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through Nov. 10); **robert graham,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 31); **steve joy,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 10); **robert kushner** and **nam june paik,** Holly S[illegible]mon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 10); **gabriel laderman,** Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 14); **jack levine,** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 24); **louis lozowick,** Deutsch, 29 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 31), and Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 27); **ann mc coy,** Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 3); **peter saul** (through Nov. 15) and **matta** (through Nov. 30), Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.; **myron stout,** Kent, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 10), and Flynn, 113 Crosby St. (through Dec. 15).



Self-portrait by Fernando Botero

GALLERIES—SoHo

Carl Andre—New floor sculptures made of limestone and copper that are simple, elegant, even a bit sensuous. Through Oct. 31. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Wallace Berman (1926-76)—Berman was a key player in defining the Southern California assemblage aesthetic. In this somewhat redundant, somewhat dated, but nonetheless interesting miniretrospective of photo-collages and a few sculptures, the artist reveals himself to be part soothsayer, part prankster, part proto-Baldessari. Through Nov. 10. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

Michael Biberstein—New paintings of misty landscapes juxtaposed with an occasional black panel. They are handsome but too highly indebted to the Chinese. Through Oct. 27. (Lang & O'Hara, 568 Broadway.)

Nayland Blake—Mixed-media assemblages of fetishized objects, using such materials as bird feathers, a Morrissey poster, potpourri, and faux tortoiseshell plates edged with gilt crowns. Some are overly precious and others border on the dumbly blunt, but many have a chilling strength, particularly the ones that play off the sexual/medical angle with S & M restraints and surgical tables. Most of them seem frozen in a Koonsian state of never-to-be-usedness. In Blake's hands this quality becomes brooding, haunting, as if he were making souvenirs of experiences unlived. Through Nov. 3. (Petersburg, 130 Prince St.)

Chuck Connelly—Darkly impastoed paintings that are dreamy and murky and have mythic ambitions, suggested by such titles as "The Milky Way" and "Lockerbie." This is a genre favored by a whole sweep of interesting artists, and it is very satisfying when done well, but these paintings are simply not very convincing. Through Nov. 10. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

Geralyn Donohue—In her first solo show, half of the Wallace & Donohue team presents some funny pieces—along with a few trite clinkers—about aesthetic and industrial destruction. The best works consist of paintings passing water into a Plexiglas trough and interrogation lamps focussed on a two-tone generic "pure painting." Through Nov. 10. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

Merilyn Fairskye—This Australian is one of those artists who have good ideas but not the imaginative spark to bring them to life. She has created skillful paintings of faces—viewed close up and split down the center—in a dark Brauntuchian style of green on green or brown on brown. Half of each work is drawn accurately and the other half is very distorted, like an anamorphic projection. The subjects include Heinrich Himmler's daughter, and several Austrian nurses who were recently tried for carrying out mercy killings on forty-seven patients. The artist uses the split between representation and anamorphism to play with the idea that there is a proper vantage point for viewing these pictures, although it can never be found. Through Nov. 3. (Leonard, 594 Broadway.)

Helmut Federle—Two large black-and-white geometric paintings that are elegant and strong, but a little dull, and a grid of drawings of off-grid black squares which evokes de Stijl, Albers, Poons, and Op. Through Nov. 17. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

James Harrison—Since the early fifties, Harrison has been working in a lively figurative style that seems somewhat derivative of the paintings of Giacometti. These colorful and energized drawn portraits of figures from Coleridge to Rimbaud to Alfred Barr bring to mind Warhol, Rivers, and Arneson, but their style predates them all. Through Nov. 10. (LedisFlam, 584 Broadway.)

Mark Innerst—New paintings that are exquisitely executed with a steady hand and lots of Old Master glazing. They are little worlds, or fragments of worlds, beautifully framed. Some recall the American Precisionists, others English landscape painting, and still others the color patches of Paul Klee. Through Oct. 27. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Kristen Jones and Andrew Ginzel—This team's pseudo-science-fair fare is getting very slick, and it's beginning to abuse the alchemical colors of gold and blue. But there is one piece that is effective enough, largely due to its simplicity. It's a demonstration of the endlessly fascinating stasis of life, in the form of a metal arm that moves very slowly over a circular tub of talc; half of the arm digs furrows in the talc, and the other half smooths them out. Through Nov. 3. (Brandt, 568 Broadway.)

Adrian Piper—Of all the artists who use their work to raise issues of racism, Piper comes closest to gaining access to the white mainstream. The work in this installation is related to that in her recent show at the Weber

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ART—Cont'd

gallery, but it is far more effective. This is particularly true of a series called "Vanilla Nightmares," in which the artist has added drawings of blacks, many of them voluptuous and some having sex, to the white world of *Times* ads and articles. When Piper draws a lusty black figure on top of one of the Calvin Klein underwear boys, for example, she displays great wit in violating an icon of white male self-absorption. But much of her work uses the form of generic conceptualism, a strategy that may seem politically correct but that also signifies the very passivity that Piper's content addresses. Through Nov. 3. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Holt Quentel / Denise Marika—It appears as if the high/low issue is everywhere, but nowhere is it examined in such a depressingly banal way as it is here. Quentel, who is perhaps best known for her equally forgettable distressed-denim paintings, has taken mass-produced Eames chairs, dressed them down in various ways to look like truck-stop furniture, and grouped them in vaguely arty arrangements. By representing junked-up design as high art, the artist is simply replaying what is an already well-worn commodity strategy. This work has none of the exquisite intellectual thoroughness of Sherrie Levine's or the razor-sharp ironic bite of Richard Prince's. / The viewer is asked to enter a large, vaguely Juddian plywood box. Attached to its far wall is a wide, deep, and somewhat more Juddian copper drawer with handles. Inside are three monitors with a repeated videotape segment of a sort of feminist "entombment"—a nude woman on a bed abruptly rolling over. You can close the drawer so that its face is flush with the plywood, or you can pull it out so that it juts into space. Perhaps the piece is meant to critique male authority in art. Both shows through Nov. 3. (Stux, 155 Spring St.)

"Fluxus Closing In"—There's renewed interest in Fluxus nowadays, and given today's climate, this exhilarating, tantalizing, and gently chaotic display of Fluxus' anti-establishment, devil-may-care spirit has come not a minute too soon. Fluxus, whose halcyon days were in the sixties, was about deliberately not creating art: the group's calling card on display claims that it "forgoes artists' indispensability, exclusiveness, individuality, ambition, forgoes all pretension towards significance, rarity, inspiration, skill, complexity, profundity, greatness, institutional and commodity value." In fact, many of the Fluxians are currently pursuing the more arty art of painting—and mostly without success, as evidenced by the smattering of recent works in the show. But there are all sorts of goodies here—many of them from the fabled Silverman Collection—including collaborative FluxKit suitcases filled with playthings; musical scores; half-eaten meals; a Buddha gazing at its own image on television; a heated-toaster-wire silhouette of a nude woman; nutty historical diagrams of events created by founder George Maciunas, a SoHo co-oper; and a Yoko Ono text piece from 1964 about valuing the copy over the original. Through Nov. 10. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

"The Last Decade: American Artists of the 80's"—This show is little more than a best-seller list, a Sotheby's preview masquerading as a historical overview. Not an ounce of hindsight can be found here: the inclusions are so predictable that even for the casual observer the exhibition may prove redundant. There are two clever juxtapositions: McCollum's surrogate paintings, Tansey's surrogate painter, and Bidlo's surrogate masterpiece; and the history of the squiggle, from Garet to Dunham to Taafe to Steinbach to Lasker. But over all, this soulless procession of single wares provides little to think about, except for the fact that of the thirty-five artists represented here only four are women. Through Oct. 27. (Shafrazi, 130 Prince St.)

Short List—**Arakawa,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through Nov. 10); **Arman,** Baghoomian, 555 Broadway (through Nov. 17); **Suzanne Bocanegra** and **Joan Snyder,** Munroe, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 3); **Francesco Clemente,** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (through Nov. 10); **Robert De Niro,** Staempfli, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 10); **Carroll Dunham,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Nov. 10); **Yuri Dyshlenko** and **Sue Israel,** Kind, 136 Greene St. (through Nov. 14); **Dan Flavin,** RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (through Nov. 10); **Georg Herold,** Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway (through Nov. 3), and Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 17); **Pat Lasch,** Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 27); **Hillary Leone and Jennifer Macdonald,** Gracie Mansion Gallery, 532 Broadway (through Nov. 3); **Sol LeWitt** and **Giovanni Anselmo,** SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St. (through Nov. 21); **Robert Longo,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through Nov. 10); **James Rosenquist,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Nov. 17); **Fred Sandback,** Nolan, 560 Broadway (through Nov. 3); **Teresa Serrano,** Plumb, 81 Greene St. (through Nov. 10); **Susan Silas,** Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Nov. 10); **Richard Tuttle,** A/D, 560 Broadway (through Nov. 10).

PHOTOGRAPHY

TWO unsung genres of art are on display at Virginia Zabriskie's gallery (724 Fifth Avenue; through November 17). The exhibition honors a group of little-known artists called the *affichistes*—they made art out of rippings of posters that had been stuck up on the streets of Paris and Rome in the fifties and sixties. (The *affichistes* are also getting a nod over at MOMA in the "High and Low" show.) They deserve all this acknowledgment, for their use of popular culture has great resonance. The work that we see at Zabriskie looks remarkably contemporary in light of our current retro climate.

Zabriskie has been one of the few galleries around to treat photography as an equal with painting and sculpture. Supplementing this show is a small group of photographs, by Harry Shunk, of the *affichistes* at work; the presence of this documentation adds flesh and blood to what's on view. Every time we see Shunk's shots of artists in action, we are reminded of another underestimated category in photography—documentary images. Shunk's work is proof that the on-the-scene photographer can provide contextual information that makes an enormous difference in understanding what an artistic movement was all about.

Man Ray (1890-1976)—A show, titled "Man Ray/Bazaar Years: A Fashion Retrospective," that contains more than this heading may suggest. Fashion and advertising turn out to have been natural stimuli for Man Ray's Surrealist vocabulary. What could be more surreal than a lipstick story (featuring a closeup of a thirties beauty—in black-and-white, except for hot-red lips—with the boldface headline "THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE"? Through Nov. 25. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**Jeannette Montgomery Barron,** Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St. (opens at noon, through Oct. 27); **John Divola,** Baum, 588 Broadway (through Nov. 24); **Elliott Erwitt,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 10); **Adam Füss,** Audiello, 142 Greene St. (through Nov. 17); **Pierre Dubreuil,** Friedman, 1117 Madison Ave., at 83rd St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 16); **Marcus Leatherdale,** Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (through Nov. 3); **Ray Metzker,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Nov. 21); **Sylvia Plachy,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. (opens at noon, through Oct. 27); **Thomas Ruff,** 303 Gallery, 89 Greene St. (through Nov. 3); **Skrebneski,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through Nov. 3); **Carrie Mae Weems,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Oct. 27); **Neil Winokur,** Toll, 146 Greene St. (through Oct. 27), and Borden, 560 Broadway (through Nov. 10); **Joe Ziolkowski,** Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway (through Nov. 3).

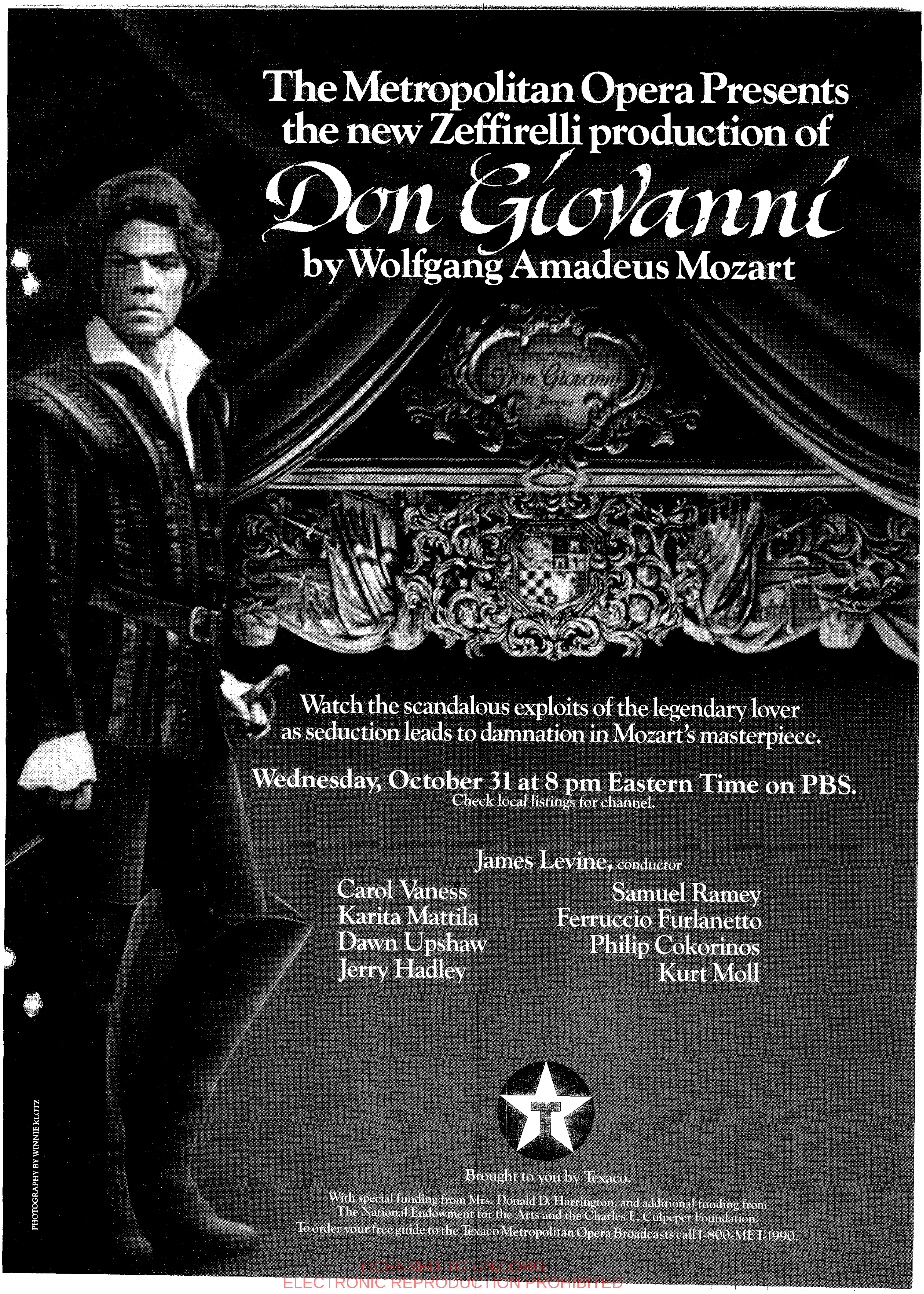
MUSIC

AIDS rarely leaps from the front page to shock us these days. In the public media-mind it has assumed a place in the near background, hanging over other thoughts and news the way a remembered nightmare shades the day that follows. But the dull roar of obituaries grows faintly louder: in one of those statistical distinctions that we file in memory without necessarily thinking them through, the rate of increase in new infections has declined, but the actual number of the ill, dying, and dead continues, for time, inevitably, to increase.

The musicians and producers who organized the 1987 "Music for Life" benefit devoted a page in the program to members of the international classical-music community known to have died of AIDS in the first six or seven years of the epidemic. There were eighty-one names. In the program for this year's "Music for Life" concert (at Carnegie Hall on October 28), the eighty-one will be reprinted, alongside—after three further years—a hundred and five more. We spoke a few days ago with Robert Ripps, the freelance producer who has been the chief organizer of both concerts, and asked him whether he'd had difficulty gathering support for the event. "With some people," he said, "the problem is attention span. It's almost as though AIDS is no longer the charity du jour." But the over-all response has been very gratifying, he said, especially among the soloists and orchestral musicians who will be donating their services. "Nobody is saying, 'I've done this already,'" he said.

Musical leadership for the concert will be provided by James Levine (who co-directed the 1987 event with Leonard Bernstein), but the soloists will all be new. "So many people have wanted to give their time to this," Mr. Ripps said, "that we asked the soloists from 1987 to let us give the opportunity to a different group." The roster for October 28 will include Placido Domingo, André Watts, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Mirella Freni, Aprile Millo, June Anderson, Itzhak Perlman, and Frederica von Stade. The program includes pieces by Rossini, Bellini, Puccini, Bach, and Beethoven, as well as several of Mr. Bernstein's works for Broadway.

The funds raised at Carnegie Hall will go toward the same purpose as before: care for the ill, administered by the Gay Men's Health Crisis. "It's much easier to raise funds for research," Mr. Ripps said, "because, especially in corporate thinking, research is positive. Research is a challenge leading to success. Sick people are negative. But the whole idea of the benefit grew out of the frustration we felt, living among our friends and loved ones who were ill. We wanted to do something for these people while they are alive. That's why it's really 'Music for Life.'" The telephone number for tickets or contributions is 977-4180.



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(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—BORIS GODUNOV, with Stefania Toczyska, Gary Lakes, Peter Kazaras, Nicolai Ghiaurov, and Sergei Koptchak; conducted by Emil Tchakarov. (Oct. 22 and Oct. 27 at 8.) . . . With Stefania Toczyska, Gary Lakes, Philip Langridge, Paata Burchuladze, and Sergei Koptchak; Emil Tchakarov. (Oct. 30 at 8.) . . . RIGOLETTO, with Sumi Jo, Alfredo Kraus, and Bruno Pola; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 23 at 8.) . . . With Sumi Jo, Jerry Hadley, and Bruno Pola; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 26 at 8.) . . . DON GIOVANNI, with Cheryl Studer, Karita Mattila, Thomas Hampson, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. (Oct. 24 at 8.) . . . With Cheryl Studer, Karita Mattila, Richard Cowan, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. (Oct. 27 at 1.) . . . UN BALLO IN MASCHERA, Verdi's mixture of magical herbs, fortune-telling, and jealousy run amok in the Swedish Court, in a new production, with Aprile Millo, Harolyn Blackwell, Elena Obraztsova, Luciano Pavarotti, and Juan Pons; James Levine. (Oct. 25 at 7:30 and Oct. 29 at 8.) . . . PORGY AND BESS, Gershwin's operatic portrayal of rough times on Catfish Row, with Priscilla Baskerville, Marvis Martin, Camellia Johnson, Larry Marshall, and Terry Cook; James Levine. (Oct. 31 at 7:30.)

New York City Opera—LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST, a revival of Puccini's pistol-packing spaghetti Western, with Martha Thigpen, Vincenzo Scuderi, and James Dietsch; conducted by Arthur Fagen. (Oct. 23 and Oct. 27 at 8.) . . . LA BOHÈME, with Geraldine McMillian, Lauren Flanigan, Jianyi Zhang, and Peter Barcza; Joseph Colaneri. (Oct. 24 at 8 and Oct. 28 at 2.) . . . THE MIKADO, with Lisa Saffer, Josepha Gayer, Richard McKee, Carroll Freeman, and James Billings; Chris Nance. (Oct. 25 at 8.) . . . MARTHA, Friedrich von Flotow's 1847 confection of romantic subterfuge, was once an immensely popular operatic staple, but it has drifted into obscurity through the years. In this new production, it is updated to England in the nineteen-twenties. With Sheryl Woods, Lucille Beer, Martin Thompson, and Dean Peterson; Arthur Fagen. (Oct. 26 at 8.) . . . With Kathryn Gamberoni, Cynthia Rose, Michael Rees Davis, and Jan Opalach; Arthur Fagen. (Oct. 30 at 8.) . . . A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC, with Sally Ann Howes, Elaine Bonazzi, Michèle McBride, Harlan Foss, Michael Rees Davis, and Michael Maguire; Paul Gemignani. (Oct. 27 at 2.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

American Chamber Opera Company—A staged double bill, conducted by Douglas Anderson: the world première of Nicholas Flagello's "The Wig" (based on Pirandello's play "The Cap"); and Darius Milhaud's "The Poor Sailor," with Jean Cocteau's libretto, here rendered in English. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. 781-0857. Oct. 26-27 at 8. Through Nov. 3.)

"The Girl from the Clouds"—*The last (and still* unpublished) opera by Heitor Villa-Lobos receives its American première in this semi-staged production, in English translation; conducted by Alfred Heller. (CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57th St. Oct. 29 at 8. For information about tickets, call 427-5103.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Leonard Slatkin conducts a memorial tribute to Leonard Bernstein, the orchestra's music director from 1958 to 1969, when he was named Laureate Conductor for Life. The program includes four of Mr. Bernstein's compositions: the overture to "Candide"; the "Serenade after Plato's Symposium" (with concertmaster Glenn Dicterow as soloist); the Symphony No. 1 (with mezzo-soprano Wendy White); and, with the New York Choral Artists (directed by Joseph Flummerfelt), the "Chichester Psalms." (Oct. 23 at 7:30.) . . . ¶ Erich Leinsdorf conducts Wagner and Ravel, and is joined by Alicia de Larrocha for Mozart's A-Major Piano Concerto and de Falla's "Nights in the Gardens of Spain." (Oct. 25-27 at 8 and Oct. 30 at 7:30.)

Japan Philharmonic Orchestra—Ken-ichiro Kobayashi conducts Toru Takemitsu's "Requiem for Strings," Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, and Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto (with Ikuyo Nakamichi as soloist). (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 24 at 8.)

Manhattan Chamber Orchestra—Richard Auldon Clark conducts music by Bartók, Milhaud, Piston, and Copland (the original chamber version of his "Appalachian Spring"). (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Oct. 25 at 8.)

Cleveland Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall, Christoph von Dohnányi conducting. Oct. 26 at 8: Symphonies by Mozart (the "Haffner") and Beethoven (his Seventh), as well as John Adams' "The Wound-Dresser," with baritone Sanford Sylvan. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 8: Hans Werner Henze's 1966 opera "The Bassarids," with an English libretto by Auden and Kallman based loosely on Euripides' "The Bacchae," receives its New York première. Soloists in this concert version include Anja Silja, Kenneth Riegel, and Vernon Hartman.

American Composers Orchestra—Dennis Russell Davies conducts four works of recent vintage: Roberto Sierra's "Preambulo"; Robert Hall Lewis's Symphony No. 4 (in its world première); William Bolcom's Symphony No. 5 (in its New York première); and Robert Beaser's "Seven Deadly Sins" (featuring bass-baritone Jan Opalach). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 28 at 2:30.)

London Classical Players—At Avery Fisher Hall, Roger Norrington conducting his authentic-instrument orchestra. Oct. 28 at 3: Music by Beethoven and Schubert. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: Music by Beethoven and Mendelssohn.

Music for Life—A benefit for the Gay Men's Health Crisis, with singers June Anderson, Mirella Freni, Aprile Millo, Frederica von Stade, and Placido Domingo; instrumentalists Itzhak Perlman, Jean-Pierre Rampal, and André Watts; and James Levine conducting an orchestra. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 28 at 8:30.)

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall. Oct. 29 at 8: Yuri Temirkanov conducts Tchaikovsky's "Manfred" Symphony and two works by Prokofiev: the "Lieutenant Kije" Suite and the Third Piano Concerto, with Dmitri Alexeev. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 8: Mariss Jansons conducts Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony and music by Prokofiev (excerpts from "Romeo and Juliet" and, with Mr. Alexeev, the rarely performed First Piano Concerto). . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 8: Yuri Temirkanov conducts music of Tchaikovsky (the Violin Concerto, with Victor Tretyakov, and Act II of "The Nutcracker").

New York Concert Singers—Judith Clurman conducts music by Fauré, Brahms, and Virgil Thomson, as well as recent works by Bruce MacCombie ("Color and Time") and Stephen Paulus ("Madrigali di Michelangelo"). (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 24 at 8.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Music by no fewer than fifteen composers, ranging from Dufay and Monteverdi to Cole Porter and Mr. Smith himself. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Oct. 27 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

Saint Thomas Choir—A commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the death of César Franck, with Gerre Hancock directing the choir, soloists, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's *in three of the composer's sacred works.* (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013. Oct. 30 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

Jessye Norman—Soprano, with pianist Geoffrey Parsons, in a recital of Brahms, Strauss, Berg, and Chausson. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 22 at 8.)

Festival of Contemporary Music From Italy—A series of panel discussions and performances of twentieth-century Italian music. Concerts feature Turin's Arturo Toscanini Chamber Ensemble, soprano Victoria Schneider, pianist Massimiliano Damerini, and other soloists; conducted by Giuseppe Garbarino. (Equitable Center Auditorium, Seventh Ave. at 51st St. Oct. 23-24 at 8. . . . ¶ Italian Cultural Institute, 686 Park Ave., at 68th St. Oct. 25 at 5. No tickets necessary. For further program and schedule information, call 595-8565.)

Trio Mexico—The violin-cello-piano ensemble, on the international circuit since 1975, performs twentieth-century Mexican works: the 1911 "Trio Romántico" of Manuel Ponce (best known as composer of the parlor song "Estrellita"), as well as pieces by Luis Sandi, Armando Lavalle, and Daniel Catán. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert. Oct. 24 at 7:30.)

Trio Bell'Arte—Bert Lucarelli (oboe), Robert Stallman (flute), and Elaine Comparone (harpsichord) perform music from the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 24 at 8.)

New York Philomusica—Works by Iain Hamilton and Schubert (his swan song, the C-Major Quintet), as well as "November 19, 1828" by John Harbison, who describes his piece as a "hallucination in four episodes" resulting from a vision he had of Schubert's death. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 25 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Violinist Ik-Hwan Bae, cellist Anthony Elliott, and pianist Paul Schoenfield play chamber music by Schubert and Mendelssohn, as well as Mr. Schoenfield's own "Cafe Music." (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Oct. 25 at 7:30 and Oct. 28 at 4.)

Lydia Milá—Soprano, in her New York recit[illegible] début, performing music by Rossini, Bellini, and Strauss (excerpts from his "Brentano Lieder"); with pianist Warren Jones. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 26 at 7.)

Christoph von Dohnányi, the conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra

Anonymous 4—This four-woman ensemble, usually associated with medieval music, leaps ahead to the late fifteenth century for a program of works by Johannes Ockeghem, assisted by seven guest singers. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Oct. 26 at 8. For ticket information, call 781-7737.)

Guarneri Quartet—Playing quartets by Beethoven, Brahms, and (with flutist Paula Robison) Mozart. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 27 at 8.)

Haydn Baryton Trio—Performing a handful of the hundred and twenty-three divertimenti for baryton, viola, and cello that Haydn composed for his barytonist-patron Prince Nikolaus Esterházy. John Hsu is featured playing the somewhat unwieldy instrument, which was intermittently popular during the eighteenth century and which has six strings for bowing and as many as twe[illegible] for plucking. (Church of St. Luke in [illegible] Fields, 487 Hudson St., at Grove St. Oct. 27 at 8. For information about tickets, call 633-2167.)

Joel Krosnick and Gilbert Kalish—Performing all of Beethoven's cello-and-piano music (five sonatas and three sets of variations), in a two-part recital. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 28 at 3 and 7:30.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—A Mendelssohn string quartet, a Handel organ concerto (with David Higgs), songs by Purcell and Mendelssohn (with David Gordon), and Bach's "Kreuzstab" Cantata (with William Sharp). (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Oct. 28 at 5 and Oct. 30 at 7:30.)

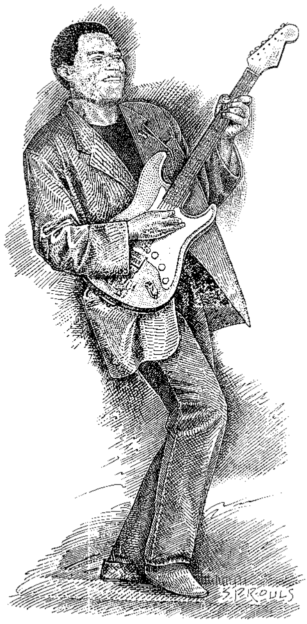
Tibetan Singing Bowl Ensemble—Nine musicians playing compositions of non-Western inspiration by their director, Raphael Mostel. The performers produce complex tones by rubbing wooden pestles against the rims of metal bowls forged in the Himalayas. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Oct. 28 at 5 and 8.)

Continuum—The modern-music ensemble presents seven pieces by Luciano Berio, in honor of the composer's sixty-fifth birthday; assisted by the Canticum Novum Singers, directed by Harold Rosenbaum, and a chamber orchestra led by Joel Sachs. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Oct. 29 at 8.)

"The Baroque Voice"—A performance-discussion of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century vocal technique and interpretation, with sopranos Julianne Baird and Ann Monoyios, bass-baritone John Ostendorf, and harpsichordist-conductor James Richman. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 29 at 8.)

Anhattan String Quartet—Performing Bartók's Second and Sixth Quartets and Schoenberg's Second Quartet (with guest soprano Lucy Shelton). (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 870-2824. Oct. 29 at 8.)

Electronic Music From Mexico—The latest sounds from south of the border, for computers, synthesizers, and other electronic instruments. (I.B.M. Gallery, Madison Ave. at 56th St. Oct. 30-31 at 7. No tickets necessary.)



Robert Cray at the Beacon

David Buechner—Piano, performing music by Joaquin Turina. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Oct. 31 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Sergei Edelmann—Piano, playing music by Beethoven, Chopin, and Prokofiev. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Oct. 31 at 8.)

New Jersey Percussion Ensemble—The battery comes to the fore in a program of recent compositions by Chester Biscardi, Mario Davidowsky, David Olan, and Robert Pollock. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 31 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Robert Cray—In the past, listening to Robert Cray was a bit of a retro experience. He wore his influences (Albert Collins, B. B. King, Otis Redding) too openly, and in concert disappeared behind them. His new album, "Midnight Stroll," seeks to remedy all that. With the help of the Memphis Horns and some terrific songwriting, Cray has finally found the stylistic breakthrough he's been searching for (it's comparable to what Stevie Ray Vaughan found on "In Step"). His barbed-wire guitar solos and haunted, pleading vocals have never given off so much heat. From the ominously rolling funk of the album's best track, "My Problem," to the killer single "Forecast (Calls for Pain)," Cray is delivering a crackling, blues-noir walk through betrayal and adultery. This is major center-stage material; here's hoping he takes it. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 26-27 at 8.)

Engelbert Humperdinck—With Dick Capri. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Oct. 25 at 8.)

Sussan Deihim and Richard Horowitz—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Oct. 26 at 8.

Tribute to Hank Mobley—Clifford Jordan, Don Sickler, Cedar Walton, Billy Higgins, and others. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 29 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Inti-Illimani, John Williams, and Paco Peña—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Oct. 31 at 8.

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Jets—Away until Nov. 4, when they face the Dallas Cowboys.

Giants—Vs. the Washington Redskins, Oct. 28 at 4.

Rangers—Vs. the Toronto Maple Leafs, Oct. 22. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Oct. 25. . . . ¶ Vs. the Quebec Nordiques, Oct. 29. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Kings, Oct. 31. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Devils, Oct. 23. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Oct. 27. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Kings, Oct. 30. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Vs. the Buffalo Sabres, Oct. 25. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Oct. 27. (Game time, 7:45.)

(The Giants play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. For information about tickets, call 1-201 935-8111. The Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Breeders' Cup is Oct. 27 (post time, 12:30). Through Oct. 29. . . . At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. Starts Oct. 31. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Halloween—The Greenwich Village Parade, a notorious and joyous event, starts this year at 7 on Oct. 31. Paraders should line up at 6 near the corner of Sixth Ave. and Spring St. Spectators should line Sixth Ave. from Spring to 14th Sts., or choose a spot in Union Square. . . . ¶ Survivor Productions presents a costumed reading of Bram Stoker's "Dracula" at the Sara Delano Roosevelt House, 47 E. 65th St., Oct. 29 at 7. For reservations, which are recommended, call 877-2988. . . . ¶ At the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, organist Lee Erwin will accompany a screening of the 1925 classic film "Phantom of the Opera." (Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Oct. 30 at 9.)

Readings—Oct. 25 at 8: Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal reads from his new epic poem, "Cántico Cósmico." Roland Legiardi-Laura reads the English translation. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 8: Adrienne Rich reads from her own poetry. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. For information about tickets, call 787-6557.) . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 4: A reading in honor of the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe, with Maya Angelou, Allen Ginsberg, Toni Morrison, and others. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. For information about tickets, call 944-9870.) . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: Charles Simic reads from his own poetry. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: John Edgar Wideman and Terry McMillan read from their own prose. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.) . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: Robert Creeley and Margaret Randall read from their own poetry. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848.)

Talk—Kirk Varnedoe gives a lecture called "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. Oct. 25 at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 708-9795.)

Memoranda—The Park Avenue Armory Antiques Show is Oct. 26, from 11 to 9; Oct. 27, from 11 to 8; and Oct. 28, from 11 to 6. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St.) . . . ¶ Daylight-saving time ends on Oct. 28 at 2 A.M. Turn the clocks back one hour.

Charles Burchfield
Watercolors 1915–1920

Moonrise Over Houses, 1917
watercolor on paper
20 x 16 inches; signed lower right

Raindrops, 1917
watercolor on paper
20¾ x 17½ inches; signed lower right

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THE MOVIE HOUSES

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	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 22.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "To Sleep with Anger" (directed by Charles Burnett), with Danny Glover.
Theatre 2: "Allegro Non Troppo" (1977, Bruno Bozzetto; in Italian), a six-episode animated and live-action film.
Theatre 3: "Akira Kurosawa's Dreams" (†).
Theatre 4: "King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Wild at Heart" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 25: "After Dark, My Sweet" (James Foley), with Jason Patric, Rachel Ward, and Bruce Dern. From Oct. 26: "Tune in Tomorrow" (Jon Amiel), with Barbara Hershey, Keanu Reeves, and Peter Falk.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"Landscape in the Mist" (Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Miller's Crossing" (†).
Theatre 2: "Avalon" (†).
Theatre 3: "GoodFellas" (†).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 25: "The Hot Spot" (Dennis Hopper), with Don Johnson. From Oct. 26: "Graveyard Shift" (Ralph S. Singleton), with David Andrews.
Theatre 3: "Avalon" (†).
Theatre 4: "Reversal of Fortune" (Barbet Schroeder), with Glenn Close, Jeremy Irons, and Ron Silver.
Theatre 5: "Ghost" (†).
Theatre 6: "Quigley Down Under" (Simon Wincer), with Tom Selleck, Laura San Giacomo, and Alan Rickman.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Fantasia" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through Oct. 25: "Postcards from the Edge" (†).
From Oct. 26: "Sibling Rivalry" (Carl Reiner), with Kirstie Alley.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 25: "The Hot Spot" (Dennis Hopper), with Don Johnson. From Oct. 26: "Graveyard Shift" (Ralph S. Singleton), with David Andrews, Kelly Wolf, Stephen Macht, and Brad Dourif.
Theatre 2: "Quigley Down Under" (Simon Wincer), with Tom Selleck, Laura San Giacomo, and Alan Rickman.
Theatre 3: "Ghost" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Pacific Heights" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Ghost" (†).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Fantasia" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 25: "Mr. Destiny" (James Orr), with James Belushi and Michael Caine. From Oct. 26: "Tune in Tomorrow" (Jon Amiel), with Barbara Hershey, Keanu Reeves, and Peter Falk.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Pacific Heights" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"White Hunter, Black Heart" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood and Jeff Fahey.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Night of the Living Dead" (Tom Savini).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Oct. 25: "Welcome Home, Roxy Carmichael" (Jim Abrahams), with Winona Ryder and Jeff Daniels.
From Oct. 26: "Sibling Rivalry" (Carl Reiner), with Kirstie Alley.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 2: "Miller's Crossing" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 2: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod), a documentary.
Theatre 3: "Akira Kurosawa's Dreams" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Avalon" (†).
Theatre 2: "Avalon" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Postcards from the Edge" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 25: "The Hot Spot" (Dennis Hopper), with Don Johnson, Virginia Madsen, Jennifer Connelly, and Charles Martin Smith. From Oct. 26: "Graveyard Shift" (Ralph S. Singleton), with David Andrews, Kelly Wolf, Stephen Macht, and Brad Dourif.
Theatre 2: "Memphis Belle" (Michael Caton-Jones), with Matthew Modine.

"Love at First Bite" (playing October 31 at Theatre 80 St. Marks) is a rude, free-form Dracula parody. It chases after the audience with a feather duster, and it gets laughs from the very first credit: George Hamilton's name next to a glaring full moon. Hamilton plays Dracula with full confidence in his silliness. His accent must be Transylvanian—it doesn't sound quite like anything else. When he says "I lo-o-ve you" it could be "I lahv you," "I Louvre you," or "I lob you." His swoop is like a lascivious sidle. Though he's cloaked in romantic (if not dental) floss, the pleasure he takes in the bite is anything but chivalric. His wiggling hand gestures come off as prurient reflexes.

This 1979 release tells what happens after the Romanian Communist Party appropriates Drac's castle for use as an athletic-training center. The vampire and his vermin-craving assistant, Renfield (Arte Johnson), jet to New York, where Dracula meets his Manhattan dream gal—a model named, for whatever reason, Cindy Sondheim (is it a signal to Send in the Clowns?). As played by Susan Saint James, Cindy is a woman who hears synthesized Cole Porter in the background of her Bruce Jay Friedman life. To the inspired disco choice "I Love the Night Life," Dracula sweeps her off her feet; her apartment could use some sweeping too.

The movie sags during the climactic chase, and it contains some dumb, racist jokes. But director Stan Dragoti and screenwriter Robert Kaufman unleash the talents of a cast that includes not just Hamilton, St. James, and Johnson but also Richard Benjamin as a man-child shrink and Dick Shawn as a cracked hardboiled cop. The film mixes slapstick with wild satire: at its best, it's "Abbott and Costello Meet Young Frankenstein."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Reversal of Fortune" (Barbet Schroeder), with Glenn Close, Jeremy Irons, and Ron Silver.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Quigley Down Under" (Simon Wincer), with Tom Selleck.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Oct. 25: "Welcome Home, Roxy Carmichael" (Jim Abrahams), with Winona Ryder and Jeff Daniels.
From Oct. 26: "Graveyard Shift" (Ralph S. Singleton), with David Andrews.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Night of the Living Dead" (Tom Savini).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mr. Destiny" (James Orr), with James Belushi and Michael Caine.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 23: "Bakayaro! I'm Plenty Mad" (1988, in Japanese), four episodes by four directors. From Oct. 24: "Tong Tana: A Journey to the Heart of Borneo" (directed by Jan Roed, Fredrik Von Krusenstjerna, Bjorn Cederberg, and Kristian Petri; in German, English, Swedish, and Penan), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Akira" (Katsuhiro Otomo), a Japanese animated science-fiction film.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "White Palace" (Luis Mandoki), with Susan Sarandon and James Spader.
Theatre 2: "Pacific Heights" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Memphis Belle" (Michael Caton-Jones).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 25: "Postcards from the Edge" (†). From Oct. 26: "Sibling Rivalry" (Carl Reiner), with Kirstie Alley.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Kill-Off" (Maggie Greenwald).
Theatre 2: "Mr. Destiny" (James Orr), with James Belushi and Michael Caine.
Theatre 3: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian).
Theatre 4: "State of Grace" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Pacific Heights" (†).
Theatre 2: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 3: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod), a documentary.
Theatre 4: "Postcards from the Edge" (†).
Theatre 5: "Miller's Crossing" (†).
Theatre 6: "White Palace" (Luis Mandoki), with Susan Sarandon and James Spader.
Theatre 7: Through Oct. 25: "Pacific Heights" (†). From Oct. 26: "Sibling Rivalry" (Carl Reiner), with Kirstie Alley.
Theatre 8: Through Oct. 25: "Miller's Crossing" (†). From Oct. 26: "Tune in Tomorrow" (Jon Amiel), with Barbara Hershey.
Theatre 9: "Memphis Belle" (Michael Caton-Jones), with Matthew Modine.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Night of the Living Dead" (Tom Savini).
Theatre 3: "Mr. Destiny" (James Orr), with James Belushi and Michael Caine.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Fantasia" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Tall Guy" (†).
Theatre 3: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 4: "Avalon" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Oct. 25: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts. From Oct. 26: "Sibling Rivalry" (Carl Reiner), with Kirstie Alley.
Theatre 6: "Postcards from the Edge" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"White Palace" (Luis Mandoki), with Susan Sarandon and James Spader.

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

Oct. 22: "Ghost" (†).

Oct. 23-25: Theatre closed.

From Oct. 26: "The Man Inside" (Bobby Roth), with Jürgen Prochnow, Peter Coyote, and Nathalie Baye.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Reversal of Fortune" (Barbet Schroeder), with Glenn Close, Jeremy Irons, and Ron Silver.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Miller's Crossing" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"Miller's Crossing" (†).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)

"Metropolitan" (Whit Stillman).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Presumed Innocent" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Quigley Down Under" (Simon Wincer), with Tom Selleck, Laura San Giacomo, and Alan Rickman.

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"Pacific Heights" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 25: "The Icicle Thief" (Maurizio Nichetti; in Italian), with Nichetti. From Oct. 26: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven; in German).

Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.

Theatre 3: "L'Atalante" (1934, Jean Vigo; in French), with Michel Simon, Dita Parlo, and Jean Dasté.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"Postcards from the Edge" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "The Hot Spot" (Dennis Hopper), with Don Johnson, Virginia Madsen, Jennifer Connelly, and Charles Martin Smith.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 25: "Welcome Home, Roxy Carmichael" (Jim Abrahams), with Winona Ryder and Jeff Daniels. From Oct. 26: "Graveyard Shift" (Ralph S. Singleton), with David Andrews, Kelly Wolf, Stephen Macht, and Brad Dourif.

Theatre 3: "Fantasia" (†).

Theatre 4: "Memphis Belle" (Michael Caton-Jones), with Matthew Modine and Eric Stoltz.

Theatre 5: "GoodFellas" (†).

Theatre 6: "Avalon" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 25: "Mr. Destiny" (James Orr), with James Belushi and Michael Caine. From Oct. 26: "Sibling Rivalry" (Carl Reiner), with Kirstie Alley.

Theatre 2: "White Palace" (Luis Mandoki), with Susan Sarandon and James Spader.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

Theatre 2: "Night of the Living Dead" (Tom Savini), with Patricia Tallman and Tony Todd.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (356-0900)

Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).

Theatre 2: "Mo' Better Blues" (†).

Theatre 3: "Narrow Margin" (directed by Peter Hyams), with Gene Hackman and Anne Archer.

Theatre 4: "To Sleep with Anger" (Charles Burnett), with Danny Glover.

Theatre 5: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod), a documentary.

Theatre 6: "Pacific Heights" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"Mr. Destiny" (James Orr), with James Belushi and Michael Caine.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "The Hot Spot" (Dennis Hopper), with Don Johnson, Virginia Madsen, Jennifer Connelly, and Charles Martin Smith.

Theatre 2: "Death Warrant" (Deran Saradian), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Theatre 3: "Ghost" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

Through Oct. 25: "King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken.

From Oct. 26: "Graveyard Shift" (Ralph S. Singleton), with David Andrews, Kelly Wolf, Stephen Macht, and Brad Dourif.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

Theatre 2: "Night of the Living Dead" (Tom Savini), with Patricia Tallman and Tony Todd.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "White Hunter, Black Heart" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood, Jeff Fahey, George Dzundza, and Alun Armstrong.

Theatre 2: "Memphis Belle" (Michael Caton-Jones), with Matthew Modine and Eric Stoltz.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Through Oct. 24: "Rebecca" (1940, directed by Alfred Hitchcock), with Joan Fontaine and Laurence Olivier; and "The Lion Has Wings" (1940, Michael Powell, Brian Desmond Hurst, and Adrian Brunel), a semi-documentary film.

Oct. 25-27: "My Favorite Wife" (1940, Garson Kanin), with Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, Gail Patrick, and Randolph Scott; and "The Philadelphia Story" (1940, George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart and Cary Grant.

Oct. 28-29: "Boom Town" (1940, Jack Conway), with Claudette Colbert, Clark Gable, Hedy Lamarr, and Spencer Tracy; and "I Love You Again" (1940, W. S. Van Dyke), with Myrna Loy, William Powell, Frank Morgan, and Edmund Lowe.

Oct. 30-31: "Stranger on the Third Floor" (1940, Boris Ingster), with Peter Lorre; "Devil's Island" (1940, William Clemens), with Boris Karloff; and "Calling Philo Vance" (1940, William Clemens), with James Stephenson.

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Through Oct. 25: "Akira" (1989, Katsuhiro Otomo), a Japanese animated science-fiction film.

Oct. 26-29: "I Was a Teenage Werewolf" (1957, Gene Fowler, Jr.), with Michael Landon; "I Was a Teenage Frankenstein" (1958, Herbert J. Strock), with Whit Bissell; and "Teenage Caveman" (1958, Roger Corman), with Robert Vaughn.

Oct. 30: "Blood of Dracula" (1957, Herbert L. Strock), with Sandra Harrison; and "Horrors of the Black Museum" (1959, Arthur Crabtree), with Michael Gough.

From Oct. 31: "How to Make a Monster" (1958, Herbert L. Strock), with Robert Harris, Paul Brinegar, Gary Conway, and Gary Clarke; "The Spider" (1958, Bert I. Gordon), with Ed Kemmer, June Kenney, and Sally Fraser; and "The Brain Eaters" (1959, Bruno Ve Sota), with Joanna Lee.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Oct. 22: "The Earrings of Madame de . . ." (1953, Max Ophuls; in French), with Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, and Vittorio De Sica; and "Le Plaisir" (1952, Max Ophuls; in French), with Claude Dauphin, Daniel Gélin, Simone Simon, Madeleine Renaud, and Jean Gabin.

Oct. 23: "Dark Passage" (1937, Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "To Have and Have Not" (1944, Howard Hawks), with Bogart, Bacall, and Walter Brennan.

Oct. 24: "Twelve Angry Men" (1957, Sidney Lumet), with Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb, and Jack Warden; and "Witness for the Prosecution" (1958, Billy Wilder), with Tyrone Power, Marlene Dietrich, and Charles Laughton.

Oct. 25: "The Misfits" (1961, John Huston), with Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, and Montgomery Clift; and "River of No Return" (1954, Otto Preminger), with Robert Mitchum and Monroe.

Oct. 26-27: "On the Waterfront" (†) and "The Wild One" (†).

Oct. 28: "Dragonwyck" (1946, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney; and "My Cousin Rachel" (1952, Henry Koster), with Olivia de Havilland and Richard Burton.

Oct. 29: "La Femme Infidèle" (†) and "This Man Must Die" (†).

Oct. 30: "Executive Suite" (1954, Robert Wise), with William Holden, June Allyson, Barbara Stanwyck, and Fredric March; and "The Hucksters" (1947, Jack Conway), with Clark Gable, Deborah Kerr, Sydney Greenstreet, and Ava Gardner.

Oct. 31: "The Fearless Vampire Killers" (1967, Roman Polanski), with Jack MacGowran and Sharon Tate; and "Love at First Bite" (see blurb on page 20).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Oct. 22 at 2:30 and 6: "The Late Matthew Pascal" (1925, directed by Marcel L'Herbier; silent), with Lois Moran. . . . ¶ Oct. 22 at 6:30: "Begotten" (1989, Elias Merhige, who will be present). . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 2:30: "The Covered Bridge" (1923, James Cruze; silent), with J. Warren Kerrigan, Lois Wilson, and Alan Hale. . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 3 and 6: "Knowing Her Place" (1990, Indu Krishnan) and "Kiyoko's Situation" (1989, Mako Idemitsu), both documentaries. . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 6: "Stark Love" (1927, Karl Brown; silent), with Helen Munday, Forrest James, and Silas Miracle. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 12:30, 3, and 6; Oct. 27-28 at 12:30, 3, and 5; and Oct. 29 at 12:30: Advertising-film-and-videotape winners of the British Television Advertising Awards in 1990. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 2:30: "La Jetée" (1963, Chris Marker; in French); and "The War Game" (1967, Peter Watkins). . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 6: "Five" (1951, Arch Oboler), with William Phipps and Susan Douglas. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 2: "Seven Days in May" (1964, John Frankenheimer), with Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas, Fredric March, and Ava Gardner. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 5: "Notorious" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 2: "Crossroads" (1975, Bruce Conner); and "Dr. Strangelove" (1964, Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, and Sterling Hayden. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 5: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 2:30: "Notorious" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 6: "Fable Safe" (1971, Eric Barnouw) and "Chernobyl, Chronicle of Difficult Weeks" (1986, Vladimir Shevchenko). . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 3 and 6: "Antigone" (1989, Amy Greenfield), with Bertram Ross, Janet Eilber, and Greenfield.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," dramas shown on television over the past thirty years. Oct. 23-27: Paddy Chayefsky's "Marty" (1953, NBC), with Rod Steiger and Nancy Marchand. . . . ¶ From Oct. 30: Thomas Wolfe's "Look Homeward Angel" (1972, CBS), with Geraldine Page, E. G. Marshall, Barnard Hughes, Kathryn Walker, Pamela Payton-Wright, and Nancy Marchand. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6, Wednesdays through Fridays at 3, and Saturdays at 1.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Courthouse Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. Oct. 22-24 at 7 and Oct. 25-28 at 9: "The Prisoner of St. Petersburg" (1988, Ian Pringle). . . . ¶ Oct. 24 at 7: "Francesco, Guillare di Dio" (1949, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian). . . . ¶ Oct. 24 at 9: A program of films by Paul Sharits. . . . ¶ Oct. 25-26 and 28 at 7: "Angels, Hard As They Come" (1972, Jonathan Demme and Joe Viola). . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 9, Oct. 27 at 10:30, and Oct. 28 at 9: "Hell's Angels '69" (1969, Lee Madden), with Tom Stern, Jeremy Slate, and Sonny Berger. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 7: "Madame X" (1977, Ulrike Ottinger).

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—Oct. 23 at noon: "The Misfits" (1961, John Huston), with Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, and Montgomery Clift. . . .

Jeremy Irons in "Reversal of Fortune"

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

¶ Oct. 23 at 2:30 "King Kong" (1933, Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack), with Robert Armstrong, Fay Wray, and Bruce Cabot. . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at noon: "Vintage Hitchcock" (1978, Saul J. Turrell) and "I'm a Stranger Here Myself" (1975, David Helpern, Jr.). . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at noon: "Wise Blood" (1980, John Huston), with Brad Dourif, Daniel Shor, Amy Wright, and Harry Dean Stanton. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 2:30: "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein" (1948, Charles T. Barton).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Oct. 24 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Story of Women" (1988, Claude Chabrol; in French), with Isabelle Huppert, François Cluzet, Marie Trintignant, and Nils Tavernier. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "I Married a Witch" (1942, René Clair), with Veronica Lake, Fredric March, Robert Benchley, and Susan Hayward.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077) "From Harlem to Hollywood: American Race Movies, 1912-48." Oct. 24 at 2: "Basin Street Revue" (1955, Joseph Kohn), a made-for-TV concert film. . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 2: "Swing" (1936, Oscar Micheaux), with Cora Green. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 2: "Murder in Harlem" (1939, Oscar Micheaux). . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 3: "Souls of Sin" (1948, Powell Lindsay), with Savannah Churchill, William Greaves, and Jimmy Wright. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 4:30: "The Negro Soldier" (1944, Frank Capra and Stuart Heisler), a documentary; and "Let My People Live" (1944, Edgar G. Ulmer), a short film with Rex Ingram. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 2: "The Emperor Jones" (†). . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 4: "Bright Road" (1953, Gerald Mayer), with Dorothy Dandridge and Harry Belafonte. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 2: "Souls of Sin."

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Oct. 26 at 6:30 and 8:30: "Fancy Dance" (1989, Masayuki Suo; in Japanese), with *Masahiro Motoki.*

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (860-1894)—Oct. 23 at 7: "Marjorie Morningstar" (1958, Irving Rapper), with Gene Kelly and Natalie Wood. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 7: "Goodbye Columbus" (1969, Larry Peerce), with Richard Benjamin, Ali MacGraw, Jack Klugman, and Nan Martin.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"Out of the Corner," a video installation by Adrian Piper. Closed Mondays.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Oct. 25 at 1 and 4:05: "Glory" (1989, Edward Zwick), with Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Matthew Broderick; and "Fields of Endless Day" (1978, Terence McCarthey-Filgate), with Lili Clark and Winston Sutton. . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 6:30: "Art Blakey: The Jazz Messenger" (Dick Fontaine), a documentary, and three short documentaries on jazz music. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 1: "Eddie Jefferson: Live from the Jazz Showcase" (1979), "Jackie McLean on Mars" (Ken Levis), "Dexter Gordon: Jazz in Exile" (Chuck France), "Sun Ra: A Joyful Noise" (Robert Mugge), and "Born to Swing: The Count Basie Alumni" (John Jeremy). . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 6:30: "Hollywood Shuffle" (1987, Robert Townsend), with Townsend; and "Putney Swope" (1969, Robert Downey), with Arnold Johnson and Antonio Fargas. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 1: "Son of Ingagi" (1941, Richard Kahn), with Spencer Williams; "Night of the Living Dead" (1968, George A. Romero); "Blackenstein" (1973, William Levey), with John Hart; and "Blacula" (1972, William Crain), with William Marshall, Denise Nicholas, and Thalmus Rasulala. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 7: "Scream, Blacula, Scream" (1973, Bob Kelljan), with Pam Grier, William Marshall, and Don Mitchell; and "Abby" (1974, William Girdler), with Carol Speed. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 2: "Sarah Vaughan: Sass & Brass" (1986, Len Dell'Amico), "Sarah Vaughan in Concert" (1984, Phil Olsman), and "Gospel Legends" (1960-64), all documentaries. . . . ¶ Oct. 28 at 6:30: "House Party" (1990, Reginald Hudlin), with Christopher Reid and Robin Harris; and "School Daze" (1987, Spike Lee), with Larry Fishburne, Giancarlo Esposito, and Lee.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

At Film Forum 2, Michael Landon in "I Was a Teenage Werewolf"

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

Akira Kurosawa's Dreams—Not one of its eight segments feels like a real dream. The kind of power that Kurosawa aims for, and intermittently achieves, in this picture is less oneiric than ceremonial. The film is a succession of sweeping dramatic gestures and lofty incantations performed in an atmosphere of hushed solemnity. The second half of "Dreams" is weak: the fifth episode, "Crows," about a fantasy encounter with van Gogh, is a thin conceit; and the remaining three segments are all static, self-conscious, and didactic. But there's greatness in the film's first hour. The opening segment, "Sunshine Through the Rain," is the vision of a small child who wanders into a forest and witnesses a wedding procession of foxes; the sequence has a wholly original sense of the rapturous fear and awe we feel when we first come upon the wonders of the natural world. The second episode, "The Peach Orchard," is also lovely (though its mood and pace are too similar to those of the first). The third segment, "The Blizzard," about four men trapped in a snowstorm, is all snow, howling-wind effects, and bleak, undifferentiated vistas of despair, until Kurosawa pulls a miracle out of the white void: a woman in long black hair and diaphanous robes appears to the party's leader as he battles sleep. It's a transcendent image, perhaps the most piercing ever made of the desires that keep people from surrendering to death. And the fourth episode, "The Tunnel," about a man returning from war and encountering his dead comrades, is a brilliant, hypnotic piece of filmmaking. With Akira Terao, who plays the dreamer in six of the segments; Mieko Harada as the Snow Fairy; Martin Scorsese as van Gogh; and Chishu Ryu. Cinematography by Takao Saito and Masaharu Ueda. In Japanese.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/10/90.) (Angelika Film Center, and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

Avalon—In legend, Avalon is an earthly paradise. The writer-director Barry Levinson uses the name as his Rosebud: it's carved into the façade of the castlelike Baltimore apartment house where the five Krichinsky brothers, Jews who immigrated from Eastern Europe before the First World War, make their first American home. In Levinson's view, those early years were a golden age. The film is set mostly during his own childhood, in the late forties, when his parents move to the suburbs, and TV breaks up the clan's social patterns, and the surviving brothers have divided into feuding factions. The scattered fine comic moments don't make up for the wide streak of fuddy-duddyism in the notion that the family used to be the bulwark of the nation's value system. The movie is an elegy to a mythical past, and people emerge from the theatre sniffling. They've been told they're suffering from soul-sickness—the loss of unity, harmony, family music. With the quietly witty Elizabeth Perkins as the American-born young wife who doesn't buy into Levinson's vision of how great the past was. Trapped living with her bickering Old World in-laws, she's practically stiff from repressed annoyance, but she's too decent and too timid to explode. Aidan Quinn is persuasive as her affable salesman husband who's not going to get caught between his wife and his mother (Joan Plowright); his specialty is keeping the peace. The peppy Kevin Pollak is Quinn's cousin and business partner. Armin Mueller-Stahl is the paperhanger grandfather Sam Krichinsky, the life-spirit central character who makes the points that Levinson wants to put across. Also with Elijah Wood as the child Michael.—P.K. (10/22/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Worldwide Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Emperor Jones (1933)—Eugene O'Neill's play about a black man's disintegration was conceived in a semi-Expressionist style, and it was filmed in that style by Dudley Murphy, from a screenplay by Dubose Heyward. Murphy, a director with ideas but almost no technique, used painted sets, exaggerated décor, and an artificial jungle; the effects are sometimes powerful, sometimes ridiculous. O'Neill's violent emotions are accurately rendered by Paul Robeson and Dudley Digges, though they seem to be acting on a stage.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Oct. 28.)

Fantasia (1940)—Disney enlisted an odd assortment of collaborators (among them Stokowski, who did it voluntarily, and Stravinsky, who was brought in involuntarily), and this grab bag of ambitious animated shorts—an attempt to combine high art and mass culture—was publicized as if it were an artistic landmark. Disney's animators provided visual interpretations of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (in Stokowski's transcription, which is a precursor of the musical processing in "2001") and of hyped-up excerpts from the "Nutcracker" Suite, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," "The Rite of Spring," the "Pastoral Symphony," "The Dance of the Hours," and "A Night on Bald Mountain" (which somehow leads into the "Ave Maria"). Volcanoes erupt and dinosaurs battle during "The Rite of Spring," garlanded girl centaurs cavort during Beethoven's "Pastoral." Initially, the film was a box-office failure, but it proved successful in revivals, especially in the early seventies, when it became a popular head film, because of such ingredients as the abstract first section, the mushroom dance during the "Nutcracker" (one of the liveliest sequences), and the overly bright—somewhat psychedelic—color. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," featuring Mickey Mouse, and parts of other sequences are first-rate Disney, but the total effect is grotesquely kitschy.—P.K. (Gramercy, Sutton, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

La Femme Infidèle (1969)—This Claude Chabrol film is an exquisitely detailed, impeccably acted, stunningly directed suspense story about adultery and passion among the bourgeoisie. Yet there isn't a breath of life in it. You observe Michel Bouquet's foxy little performance as the cuckold, the glossy beauty of Stéphane Audran (she looks like a rich, chic Jeanne Hébuterne) as the wife, and Maurice Ronet's assured professionalism as the seducer, and you see the points being made about the hidden violence of overcivilized people. But the expertise is so tired, so masterly and perfectly slick, that the film looks as if Chabrol polished it until he ran out of spit. With Michel Duchaussoy. Chabrol wrote the script; cinematography by Jean Rabier. In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 29.)

Ghost—It sounds like a horror movie, but it's a romantic fairy tale. The scariest thing about it is its shamelessness. A young New

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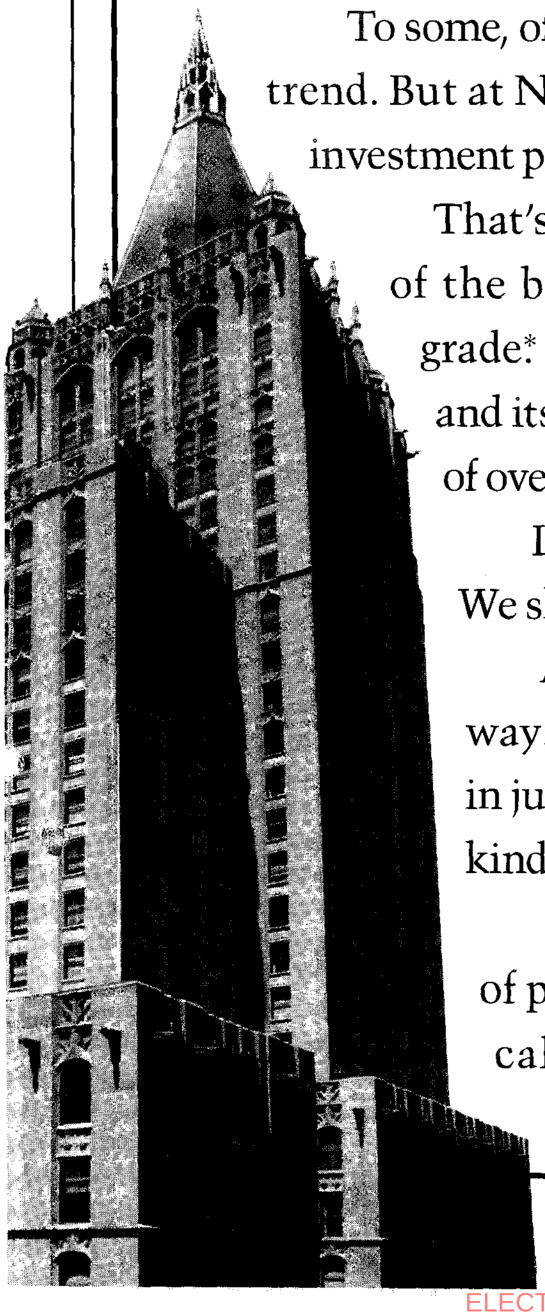

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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

York bank executive, Sam (Patrick Swayze), is killed, on the street, at a moment in his life when everything seems to be going his way. After his death, Sam sticks around, as a spirit (and Swayze stays on screen, as a body). He attends his funeral; watches his beautiful girlfriend, Molly (Demi Moore), drift grief-stricken through the spectacular loft they had just moved into; and then devotes himself to protecting her from the people who killed him. Through a reluctant psychic (Whoopi Goldberg), he tries to communicate with Molly; later, an experienced ghost (Vincent Schiavelli) teaches him how to move objects and break stuff. In this movie, death is treated as if it were merely a form of disability, one of those handicaps we've seen people struggle bravely with in TV movies—something for the individual to triumph over, with will power, hard work, and love. This creamy-toned fantasy, directed by Jerry Zucker from a screenplay by Bruce Joel Rubin, certainly pushes the audience's emotional buttons. It's a twentysomething hybrid of "It's a Wonderful Life" and some of the goofier, more solemn episodes of "The Twilight Zone," and there's not a trace of wit or irony in it. Its images of death have a soothing banality, like a greeting-card message from the world beyond. Also with Tony Goldwyn and Rick Aviles.—T.R. (7/30/90) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Eastside Cinema, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews Festival; Oct. 22.)

At the Lincoln Plaza, Michel Simon in "L'Atalante"

GoodFellas—The director, Martin Scorsese, gives you a lift. He loves the Brooklyn organized-crime milieu, because it's where distortion, hyperbole, and exuberance all commingle. His mobsters are high on having a wad of cash in their pockets. The movie is about being cock of the walk, with banners flying and crowds cheering. Based on Nicholas Pileggi's nonfiction book "Wiseguy," it's a triumphant piece of filmmaking—journalism and sociology presented with the brio of drama. But the three major hoods, played by Ray Liotta, Robert De Niro, and Joe Pesci, don't have a strong enough presence, and the movie lacks the juice and richness that come with major performances. (It's like the Howard Hawks "Scarface" without Scarface.) What you respond to is Scorsese's bravura: the filmmaking process becomes the subject of the movie. Watching it is like getting strung out on pure sensation. Paul Sorvino as Paulie and Lorraine Bracco as Karen both come through, and Tony Darrow as a restaurant owner, Welker White as a drug courier who needs her lucky hat to make a coke delivery, and other performers in minor roles give the movie a frenzied, funny texture. The screenplay is by Pileggi and Scorsese; the cinematography is by Michael Ballhaus; the editing is by Thelma Schoonmaker.—P.K. (9/24/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Henry & June—Philip Kaufman's wonderful new film shows us the writers Henry Miller (Fred Ward) and Anaïs Nin (Maria de Medeiros) in the first year of their acquaintance, the period of their brief, intense love affair. It's the love story of two people who are making themselves, and each other, up as they go along: Miller and Nin are at once real people and the products of their own imaginations—collaborators in a matched pair of literary myths. And the action unfolds in and around a city that seems both itself and a figment of itself: the Paris of the thirties. Kaufman brings out the bizarre, almost monstrous comedy of this odd literary/sexual love affair; he presents it as a kind of parody image of relationships between men and women. The third major character, Miller's wife, June (Uma Thurman), is the most mysterious presence here. She seems to represent a demonic, annihilating sexual force, but by the end she's almost a tragic figure; Miller and Nin have given each other the strength to write her out of their lives, in the most literal sense. The actors are splendid: Kaufman gets miraculously intelligent performances from Ward and de Medeiros, and Thurman—uninhibited yet also weirdly delicate—gives the picture a jolt every time she appears. (It's as if a character from a Strindberg chamber drama had barged into "Design for Living.") The movie creates a world, and Kaufman is both affectionate toward and clear-eyed about the people who live in it: he's concerned more with *enjoying* his characters, in all their contradictions, than with explaining them. The material plays as rich, dark erotic farce—a comedy about the duplicity of writers. Also with Richard E. Grant (as Nin's husband) and Kevin Spacey. The screenplay, by Kaufman and his wife, Rose, is based on Nin's diary. Superb cinematography by Philippe Rousselot.—T.R. (10/8/90) (Baronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Hiroshima, Mon Amour (1959)—Hushed and hypnotic, it makes you so conscious of its artistry that you may feel as if you're in church and need to giggle. This first full-length film by Alain Resnais has a script by Marguerite Duras that features musical, incantatory dialogue and a crucial line, "They make movies to sell soap, why not a movie to sell peace?" The movie, which opens with the intertwined nude bodies of a French movie actress (Emmanuèle Riva) and a Japanese architect (Eiji Okada), was taken as powerful propaganda against the atom bomb. As the film goes on, the woman tells the man about her first experience of love: it was with a German soldier, who was killed on the last day of fighting. Her lyric, masochistic account lingers in the air. With its doomed romance in the past and its tortured affair in the present, this is a woman's picture in the most derogatory sense of the term, but with a high-cultural tone. Riva gives a remarkably fine performance. Eiji Okada says no more than an analyst might; he is simply a sounding board. And if, being Japanese, he is supposed to represent the world's conscience, he brings an unsuitably bland, professionally sympathetic, and upper-class manner to the function. The images of the two in bed are intercut with what is supposed to be documentary footage of the effect of the bomb on Hiroshima, but some of the footage is from a fictional Japanese atrocity movie. In French. —P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 28.)

Miller's Crossing—A cold, clever period gangster movie by the Coen brothers. (Ethan produces and Joel directs, from a script they've written together.) Essentially, it's an academic exercise, a pastiche of the intricately plotted, morally ambiguous crime fiction of Dashiell Hammett: the screenplay incorporates large chunks of "Red Harvest" and "The Glass Key," with a notion or two from "The Maltese Falcon" thrown in. The Coens have certainly done their homework: their movie is a brilliant reading of Hammett. But that's all it is. The picture seems to have no life of its own, and the Coens' formal control and meticulously crafted ironies become, after a while, rather depressing. This is not so much a gangster movie as an extended, elaborate allusion to one. With Gabriel Byrne, Marcia Gay Harden, John Turturro, Jon Polito, J. E. Freeman, and Albert Finney (who is, by a long shot, the most entertaining performer in the movie). The cinematography, by Barry Sonnenfeld, is handsome, but in a studied and not very expressive way.—T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Coronet, Chelsea Cinemas, Carnegie Hall Cinema, and Carnegie Screening Room.)

Mo' Better Blues—The hero of Spike Lee's film is a trumpet player named Bleek Gilliam (Denzel Washington), who is squarely in the tradition of obsessive, single-minded movie jazz musicians. Lee's script presents Bleek with a series of choices, about his love life, his artistic life, and the connection between them. The problem with the picture is that it doesn't frame the hero's choices so that we know what's at stake. And Lee doesn't seem to have thought through the role of the music. He has set the film in the present—in pointed contrast with other recent movies about jazz—but his attitude toward the music's relationship to contemporary culture is incoherent. The picture has a distracted, meandering quality. Denzel Washington's magnetism and intelligence keep the movie watchable even during its most aimless stretches, but the script doesn't allow him to shape the performance. Lee's filmmaking here is all notions and no shape: hard, fierce blowing, rather than real music. Also with Wesley Snipes, Joie Lee, Cynda Williams, Giancarlo Esposito, Dick Anthony Williams, John and Nicholas Turturro, and the late Robin Harris. Lee himself plays a comic lovable-sidekick role. The score is by Bill Lee (the director's father), and the music of Bleek's quintet is played by the Branford Marsalis Quintet, with Terence Blanchard as the trumpet soloist.—T.R. (8/13/90) (Criterion Center.)

Notorious (1946)—Alfred Hitchcock's amatory thriller stars Ingrid Bergman as the daughter of a Nazi, a shady lady who trades secrets and all sorts of things with American agent Cary Grant. The suspense is terrific: will suspicious, passive Grant succeed in making Bergman seduce him, or will he take over? The honor of the American male is saved by a hairbreadth, but Bergman is literally ravishing in what is probably her sexiest performance. Great trash, great fun. With Claude Rains, Louis Calhern, Madame Konstantin, and Reinhold Schunzel. Script by Ben Hecht; cinematography by Ted Tetzlaff; music by Roy Webb.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 27 and 29.)

On the Waterfront (1954)—The director, Elia Kazan, and the writer, Budd Schulberg, start out to expose racketeering in the waterfront unions, and wind up trying to make the melodrama transcend itself. They fail, but the production took eight Academy Awards anyway, and most of them were deserved. It is one of the most powerful American movies of the fifties, and few movies caused so much talk, excitement, and dissension—largely because of Marlon Brando's performance as the inarticulate, instinctively alienated bum, Terry Malloy. Some of Brando's scenes, such as his having a beer with Eva Marie Saint in a bar and his conversation with Rod Steiger in a car, have real vibration. (The latter one has been imitated to the point of notoriety.) The attempt at dynamic Christian symbolism and Karl Malden's big scenes as a conscientious priest are far below the imaginative level of the simpler, more realistic scenes, and Kazan hypes up the hollowest parts of the melodrama, achieving some effects of shrieking emptiness. (In order to have a triumphant, audience-pleasing finish, what actually happened in the dock situation t[illegible]t the film was based on has been falsified; the model for Terry Malloy did not succeed in toppling the crooked bosses.) It's a near-great film, though. Score by Leonard Bernstein; cinematography by Boris Kaufman; based on articles by Malcolm Johnson. With Lee J. Cobb as an avaricious union boss, and Leif Erickson, Martin Balsam, Tony Galento, Fred Gwynne, Pat Hingle, Nehemiah Persoff, Clifton James, and Michael V. Gasso.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 26-27.)

Pacific Heights—It's supposed to be a thriller, but it's more like an executive decision to make a thriller. The director, John Schlesinger, has his professionalism—it shows in the clean, efficient staging. But the fun is missing: he scares you only by making you nervous. Melanie Griffith and Matthew Modine are the San Francisco lovers who fix up a Victorian house (on Potrero Hill);

Michael Keaton is the sicko scam artist who takes over one of their two rental units and calls the police when they try to evict him. It's a drag that we're expected to identify with the dull young couple; the tenant with the perverted legalistic mind and the fiendish cupid's-bow smile provides the only gleams of interest. A promising cast—it includes the uncredited Beverly D'Angelo, and Laurie Metcalf, Dorian Harewood, Carl Lumbly, Mako, Tracey Walter, Dan Hedaya, Luca Bercovici, Guy Boyd, and Tippi Hedren as rich Florence—is all but thrown away. —P.K. (10/22/90) (34th St. East, Gotham Cinema, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Criterion Center.)

Postcards from the Edge—This tale of a sorrowful, wisecracking starlet (Meryl Streep) whose brassy, boozing former-star mother (Shirley MacLaine) started her on sleeping pills when she was nine is camp without the zest of camp. It's camp played borderline straight—a druggy-Cinderella movie about an unformed girl who has to go past despair to find herself. The director, Mike Nichols, is a parodist who feigns sincerity, and his tone keeps slipping around. What's clear is that we're meant to be enthralled by the daughter's radiant face, her refinement, her honesty. Nichols keeps the camera on Streep as if to prove that he can make her a popular big star—a new Crawford or Bette Davis. (She remains distant, emotionally atonal.) The tacky, bright-colored film—a near-plotless version of a woman's picture—is weightless, yet it's watchable. Its jadedness appeals to the narcissism of show-biz insiders and to the would-be insider in the rest of us. (Nichols is acclaimed for being hip to the Zeitgeist.) There are a lot of people to look at: Gene Hackman, Dennis Quaid, Richard Dreyfuss, Annette Bening, Robin Bartlett, C. C. H. Pounder, Oliver Platt, Gary Morton, Mary Wickes, Rob Reiner, Simon Callow, Michael Ontkean, Pepe Serna, and Dana Ivey. The screenplay, by Carrie Fisher (with Nichols' uncredited collaboration), is based on her novel; cinematography by Michael Ballhaus. —P.K. (10/22/90) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema, and Art Greenwich Twin; through Oct. 25.)

Presumed Innocent—A ponderous adaptation of Scott Turow's cunningly plotted mystery novel. The director, Alan J. Pakula, has shot and paced the movie as if it weren't a mystery but a serious character study, an art film. It's lit (by Gordon Willis) like "Cries and Whispers," only without the bright-red accents: the movie's palette seems to consist of brown and gray—earnest, business-suit colors. The lunacy of treating this story as a deep exploration of character is that the only thing we really want to know about the character in question—Rusty Sabich (Harrison Ford), a Midwestern prosecutor accused of murdering one of his colleagues (Greta Scacchi)—is: Did he do it or not? Ford, in what is probably an unplayable role, has to maintain a tense, repressed, impenetrable expression throughout. Bonnie Bedelia, as Rusty's nervous, self-deprecating wife, gives lovely shadings to a tough part. As the judge presiding over Rusty's trial, Paul Winfield supplies some sorely needed comedy. And Raul Julia, as the hero's lawyer, is an elegant, commanding presence in the courtroom scenes.—T.R. (8/13/90) (Cinema 3.)

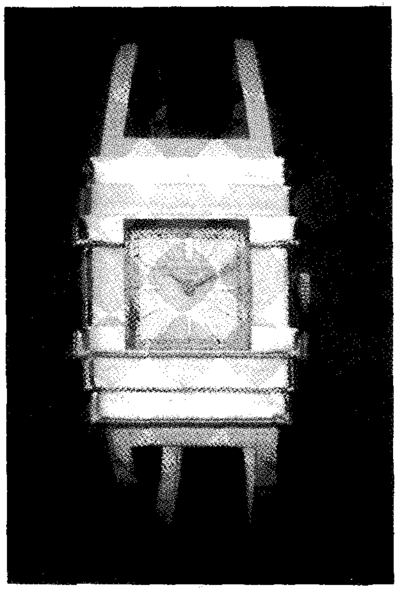
State of Grace—A violent, fairly exciting contemporary gangster movie. What's unusual about the picture is that the thugs are mostly Irish; they're based, loosely, on the Hell's Kitchen gang known as the Westies. The novelty of the characters' ethnicity wears off quickly, because everything else in the movie is secondhand. The relationship between the sensitive, conflicted hero (Sean Penn) and his volatile best friend (Gary Oldman) is hijacked—shamelessly, in broad daylight—from "Mean Streets." The screenplay, by Dennis McIntire, leans heavily on the most familiar Hollywood suspense devices. And Phil Joanou directs as if he were compiling an anthology of action-movie styles from the past two decades of American filmmaking. (He quotes Peckinpah, Coppola, De Palma, and Walter Hill, as well as Scorsese.) The film is never convincing, but it moves, and the performances, by Oldman, Ed Harris, and (especially) Penn are strong. Also with John Turturro.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

The Tall Guy—Jeff Goldblum as an American actor in London who has spent six years playing stooge to a detestably smug English comic (Rowan Atkinson) and has lost his confidence and most of his sex drive. Then this gangling wreck is cast as the lead in an Andrew Lloyd Webber-style version of "The Elephant Man"—"Elephant!" the musical. Directed by Mel Smith, from a script by Richard Curtis, this satire of the life of the theatre has a loose, inventive dottiness. Goldblum's wild-eyed sloppy good nature sets off Atkinson's lethal genius at playing an articulate swine, and the whole cast appears to be acting in clover. That includes Emma Thompson, who seems stripped down to pure flakiness, and Geraldine James as a nympho landlady, Hugh Thomas as a diphead doctor, Anna Massey as a gleaming smart agent, Kim Thomson as a curly-haired singer, and the insidious Peter Kelly as the smarmy mountebank who stages "Elephant!" Mel Smith turns up in several bits; he's the puffy-faced fellow who looks like a pixie Alfred Hitchcock.—P.K. (9/24/90) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

This Man Must Die (1969)—Claude Chabrol directed this suspense movie about a father who sets out to avenge the hit-and-run murder of his son, but his technique sags, and the movie is so attenuated and so unhurried that it dies on the screen. When you hear that the father's quest for the child's murderer is like looking for a needle in a haystack, you want to giggle, because practically the only other man in the movie is the hit-and-run driver. With Michel Duchaussoy as the father, and Jean Yanne, who gives the picture a little energy, as the uncouth villian. From Nicholas Blake's novel, "The Beast Must Die." In French).—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 29.)

Wild at Heart—Right from the start, just about everything is wrong with David Lynch's new movie, and the wrongness has an escalating, vertiginous quality. Every false move seems to lead to another, more disastrous than the one before. It's a buzzing, hyperkinetic picture, but its wildness is all on the surface: the images are elaborately conceived, arresting, and meaningless, like tattoos. The novel by Barry Gifford on which Lynch based his screenplay is a languorous, arty trifle about a pair of lovers named Sailor (Nicolas Cage) and Lula (Laura Dern), who drive from North Carolina to Texas and stop at ratty hotels and motels along the way; they're hard-lovin' losers who smoke a lot and don't get to the place they set out for (California). Their happiness is threatened by a variety of kinky villains, mostly of Lynch's invention: Gifford's poky deep South odyssey is now an orgy of evil, full of graphic violence and grotesque craziness. The shocks don't have much resonance, though; the weirdness here is inexpressive and trivial, even silly. And the lurid villainy always seems diversionary, a baroque disguise for a bland, lifeless, and overfamiliar story. The movie is one startling lapse of taste after another; it's a sorry spectacle.—T.R. (8/27/90) (Angelika Film Center.)

The Wild One (1954)—Based on the 1947 events in Hollister, California, when a convention of four thousand motorcyclists took over the town, this film offers a nightmare image: the "Black Rebels," an outlaw motorcycle gang—a leather-jacketed pack who resemble storm troopers—terrorize a town. Their emblem is a death's head and crossed pistons and rods, and Marlon Brando, in his magnetic, soft-eyed youth, is their moody leader. The picture seemed to be frightened of its subject—the young nihilists who said "no" to American blandness and conformity—and reduced it as quickly as possible to the trivial meaninglessness of misunderstood boy meets understanding girl (Mary Murphy), but the audience savored the potentialities, and this clumsy, näive film was banned and argued about in so many countries that it developed a near-legendary status. In this country, young men were saying "It's the story of my life" for several years afterward. Some of the scenes, such as the one in which the cyclists circle around the frightened heroine, have considerable power. And the film has that memorable moment when a woman asks Brando, "What are you rebelling against?" and he answers, "What have you got?" With Lee Marvin as Brando's rival for control of the pack, Robert Keith, Jay C. Flippen, and Ray Teal. Directed by Laslo Benedek, from a screenplay by John Paxton, based on the story "The Cyclists' Raid," by Frank Rooney. Cinematography by Hal Mohr. —P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 26-27.)



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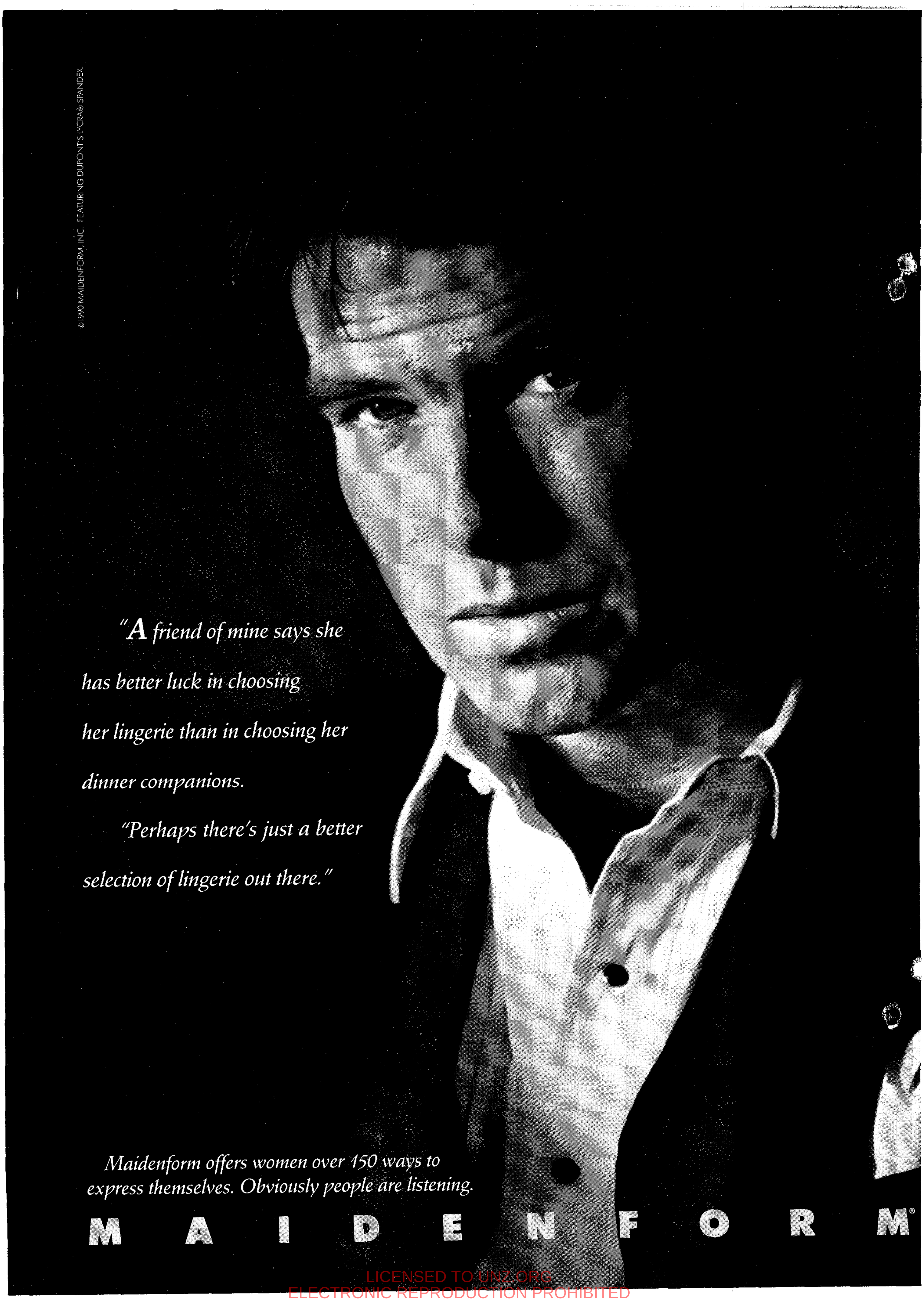
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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

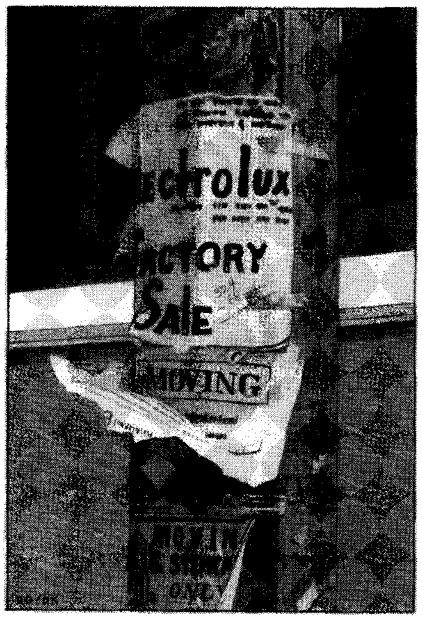
Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

I'm a little too young to remember the Kennedy-Nixon debates. I'm told that I watched them, but my true memory really starts with events of a couple of years later: I can recall the weekend of President Kennedy's murder and funeral almost minute by minute. The debates sit just outside my sense of things, as if they were a distant mythical region on a medieval map. Like any American kid from a liberal family, however, I knew at least the mythology—how Nixon, sweating and shifty and cagey, was defeated by the poised and charismatic young Kennedy, and how, just this once, the best in American life (youth, charm, openness, fearlessness) vanquished the worst (fear, xenophobia, narrow-mindedness, prevarication). So when the Arts & Entertainment cable network decided a few weeks ago, on the thirtieth anniversary of those debates, to rebroadcast a big chunk of the first one, I looked forward to watching it more or less the way I look forward to watching highlight films of great upsets pulled off by teams I love. What I saw, though, was very different from what I expected. Watching the debate brought home not so much the wit and poise of J.F.K. or the nascent malevolence of Richard Nixon as something far more surprising and disturbing—the almost unbelievable debasement of American political discourse in the intervening thirty years.

Nixon, it's true, starts off looking creepy. The first shot of him—eyes darting from side to side, a woefully impish smile lighting up his face and then getting gulped down—is as bad as they say. But Kennedy is no Prince Charming; he is stolid and impassive—*stony*. His eyes are set disturbingly wide apart; he looks like a watchful amphibian. Then the two men start talking—making their opening statements, answering questions, responding to each other's remarks—and it is as if this Presidential debate were happening in some other culture.

Early on, Vice-President Nixon invites the listeners to compare the performances of the Eisenhower and the Truman Administrations to get a fair picture of which party is better able to lead the country, and he goes on to make the comparisons himself. He then says that he and Senator Kennedy both feel deeply about the problems of the elderly and the poor. He says he is sure that both of them want the same things for their country—that they have no differences about ultimate goals but only about appropriate means. A few minutes later, one of the panelists asks Senator Kennedy if he really feels that he has enough experience to be President. Kennedy explains how long he has been in office and points out that his experience and Nixon's are comparable, and then says that he is a leader in the progressive tradition of Roosevelt and Truman. Nixon is asked if he has anything to say in reply. He shakes his head with nervous good nature: No, let that stand.



One of the panelists remarks that Senator Kennedy has been saying he intends to reduce the federal debt, and asks how he proposes to do it if he also intends to spend more money on social programs. Kennedy objects. No, never, he says, in a tone that suggests impatience with anyone who could be so unrealistic about fiscal issues that are so plain—he would never have pretended that it was possible to reduce the debt in the first few years of his Administration. There are many problems to attack; money has to be spent on education, for instance. Nixon points out a moment later that Senator Kennedy is telling the truth—that he never promised to reduce the debt—but that there was a reference to a reduced debt in the Democratic *platform*. Then Nixon discusses that platform.

The debate was hardly without conventional pieties and cant. Both men take it for granted that Americans are engaged in a life-and-death struggle—truly a war—with the Communists, and, strange as this may seem now, both men apparently assume that the Russians could soon forge ahead. (A lot of time is taken up comparing hydro-power-production stats.) But neither man questions the other's integrity or patriotism, suggests that a debate between conservative and liberal points of view isn't healthy for the country, produces a programmed "zinger," resorts to a cheap line, delivers a canned speech, or pretends that running a government doesn't mean making difficult choices among competing interests. Nor does either man seem particularly wary about committing a "gaffe" (saying something true but impolitic)—perhaps because the journalists on the panel don't seem particularly eager to provoke one. And the journalists don't assume that their role is to uncover the "real" personality of the candidates; it's impossible to imagine a reporter on this occasion asking the Senator what he would do if Jackie Kennedy were raped—or, for that matter, whether he had ever committed adultery.

Nothing profound was said; no wise remarks or keen insights were offered. It's not that this was a debate of any particular substance, as opposed to the merely "symbolic" battles we suffer through now. The good manners, the show of mutual respect, the high seriousness were probably symbols themselves. But both men seem to have felt that candidates running for the Presidency of the United States ought to appear serious, magnanimous, and articulate, and that to abuse your opponent or question his patriotism or poke fun at his programs—to sigh and say, "There you go again," or to pivot and point at him, or even just to tell "humanizing" personal anecdotes—was beneath the dignity of the occasion. I realized as the debate ended why the disturbingly humorless impassivity that Kennedy insisted on assuming seemed so strange: John Kennedy was the only Presidential candidate I have ever seen who tried to look graver—and *older*—than he really was.

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Babes on Broadway

"IS it raining out?" That is the question Burton Lane asked before leaving his apartment last Saturday night to drive down to the Golden Theatre, where he was to appear onstage with Michael Feinstein, the thirty-four-year-old Britannica of Broadway and Hollywood musicals, whose current New York engagement coincides with the release of his latest album, "Michael Feinstein Sings the Burton Lane Songbook, Vol. I." It wasn't a bad question, but Mr. Lane, who is seventy-eight and began composing songs for the stage and the movies in the late twenties, is better known for some other questions he has asked over the years, such as "I like New York in June, how about you?" and "How could you believe me when I said I love you when you know I've been a liar all my life?" and "How are things in Glocca Morra?"

Mr. Lane was sitting in his living room, a few paces from the piano on which he composed the score for "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever." Whatever the weather, if you look out the picture window next to the piano you can see the Dakota, across the street, and a stretch of Central Park. "It was Michael's idea to do the album," he said. "He's been a fan of mine, and I'm a fan of his. I met him at Ira Gershwin's memorial—Michael had worked for Ira, arranging his files and memorabilia—and we became friends. When Michael got this engagement, he said, 'How would you like to perform a few songs with me?' So we did it opening night, and the reception was marvellous. When we did it a second time, I was prepared for a letdown, but there was a standing ovation. People who don't perform don't know what friends their songs make for them."

When it was time to leave for the theatre, Mr. Lane got up and put a trenchcoat on over his stage duds—a gray suit, a pink-and-white checked shirt, and a snazzily patterned silk tie. He is a tall, handsome man with warm brown eyes, which disappear when he laughs; a prominent nose; wavy white hair; and long hands, which he waves freely when he talks. He has a low, gravelly voice and a New York accent, and he walks with his head tilted forward, in a way that makes him seem both shy and eager.

In the car, Mr. Lane chatted with his wife, Lynn (in a midtown traffic jam, he turned to her and asked "Remember when there were traffic cops?" and when she said "Yes, I do," he came back gallantly with "That was before your time, darling"), and spoke of the twenty-two years he spent in Hollywood: going to Joan Crawford's house to coach her in the songs he'd written for "Dancing Lady" and finding that the white keys on her piano were gold; arranging an audition at M-G-M for Judy Garland when she was still Frances Gumm, after he saw her perform with her sisters at the Paramount Theatre ("I was so excited I went to the lobby and called the studio, and they said 'Bring her out' "); writing songs for Fred Astaire to sing in "Royal Wedding." Now that Irving Berlin was gone, he said, he was the only composer alive who had written for Astaire. All the lyricists Mr. Lane worked with in his heyday—Ira Gershwin, Frank Loesser, Ralph Freed, E. Y. (Yip) Harburg, Alan Jay Lerner—are gone, too, but he has never stopped writing and has never failed to find new lyricists to work with, and the current album includes the fruits of two recent collaborations.

STREET CLOSED

Onstage at the Golden, Mr. Feinstein, dressed in a burgundy dinner jacket, gave 'em what they wanted ("Manhattan," "I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise") and what they didn't know ("Alexander's Bag-Pipe Band"), while Mr. Lane waited, a little nervously, in the wings. "I'm always afraid of forgetting the lyrics," he said. It wasn't long before Mr. Feinstein announced that he would now perform some selections from his new album, and went on, "No tribute to Burton Lane would be complete without actually having him here. And you know what? He's with us tonight, and I'd like to bring him out. Ladies and gentlemen, Burton Lane!"

A quick wave to the audience, a hug for Mr. Feinstein, and Mr. Lane settled down at the piano. Right away, the two guys started in on "Babes on Broadway": "We left Topeka, we left Eureka, and came to seek a career. Oh, we're milking applause instead of *milking a cow*, 'cause we're babes on Broadway now!" Mr. Feinstein stood behind the piano, leaning over to watch his partner's hands. Mr. Lane played in a spare, jaunty style, bobbing his head as he hit the keys, and occasionally looking up to give Mr. Feinstein a nod and a smile. When the second song, "Anything Can Happen in New York," was over, Mr. Feinstein beamed at the audience and said, "And we haven't even played a hit yet."

The next number fixed that. Mr. Lane introduced it by saying that it was the first song of his to be nominated for an Academy Award. "But my good friend Irving Berlin came up with 'White Christmas,' " he added. "That finished it. We became an also-ran. But the good news is that forty-nine years later it's still good." His fingers strolled into “How About You?” and he sang the words in an easygoing, sailing-down-the-avenue fashion, then tossed the bouncing ball to Mr. Feinstein, who carried it home.

The last song of Mr. Lane’s set was the kind of up-tempo, I’m-going-to-make-it-in-show-business-or-die-trying number that used to be sung by a plucky gal who had left Topeka and a plucky fella who had left Eureka. The fellas up on the stage made a great go of it, so the audience had no choice but to obey the song’s instructions, and reward them with “applause, applause, vociferous applause, from orchestra to gallery.” A hug, a wave, and Mr. Lane was gone.

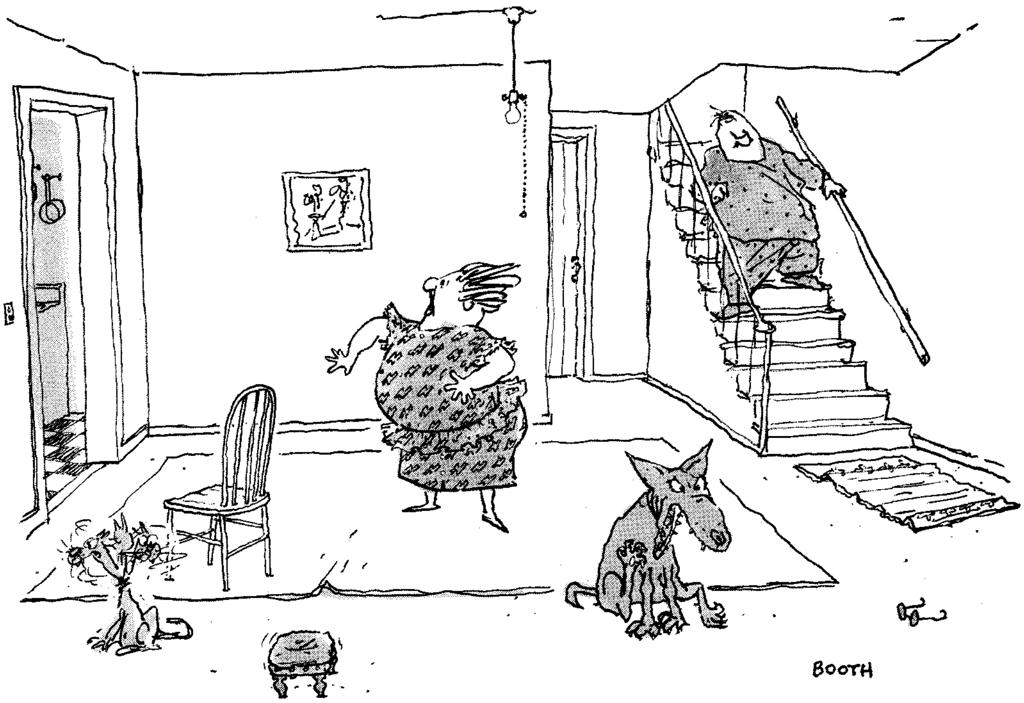
Now for some answers.

How *are* things in Glocca Morra?

“When people ask me that, I just look. I don’t know what to say.”

And *do* you like New York in June?

“Well, if it’s not too hot I like it a lot.”



“I’m not eating breakfast this morning, because I had my diet drink this morning. And I had a breakfast late last night anyway. I think I’ll have an early lunch.”

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Tiny Pieces of Fabric

IN a big, handsome book with the name “KNOLL” on the cover (Knoll is the name of the eminent firm of designers and makers of office furniture) we find these sentences: “In the last months of 1918, on leave from the Italian front, a thirty-five-year-old German Army officer named Walter Gropius witnessed the beginnings of the uprising which overthrew the Hohenzollern monarchy. . . . Unbidden, the thought came into his mind: ‘This is more than just a lost war. A world has come to an end. We must seek a radical solution to our problems.’ ” Well, every epoch has its problems, and in a nicely put-together booklet we picked up the other day at the Knoll International showroom, on Wooster Street, in SoHo, we find this description of the contract-furniture business in the nineteen-nineties: “*A tough business in an unforgiving world.*” Knoll is, of course, one of the inheritors of Herr Gropius’s modernist solutions to what the world should do after the Great War, but in this post-Hohenzollern era the Knoll people have had to look about them for further solutions. One thing they have done is to design something called the Morrison Network System, which is, we guess, an efficient response to the needs of today’s mercilessly demanding furniture buyers, and another is to hire Jhane Barnes, who ordinarily designs menswear—jackets, socks, ties, sweaters, and all that—to design fabric for their furniture and their office systems.

We’ve seen what she has done. We’ve seen panel fabric named Jasmine (panels separate cubicles and various other spaces in offices), and upholstery named Mimosa to go with the panel fabric named Jasmine. We’ve seen Cypress, which is a panel fabric, and Arbor, which is upholstery, and, we must say, it all made us think more about some strange production of Shakespeare for children than about Rilke, for example, or any other modernist hero. We’ve also seen banners by Jhane Barnes. They were named Waves and Romanie and Luna—names that sounded like the titles of relaxation tapes. And we’ve seen what you might call the relaxation-tape/Bauhaus interface—an Eero Saarinen “womb” chair in a fabric named Luna in a color named Poppy.

We saw all this when we attended a party in the showroom to celebrate Jhane Barnes’ association with KnollTextiles. We were happy, really. There was a catwalk in the principal space, running right across it, and if you looked at it, as you could hardly help doing, you noticed fourteen swivel chairs lined up there. A family of chairs. Bright red. They were called Bulldog Chairs.

The main thing Jhane Barnes is doing for Knoll, if you want to know, is designing panels and upholstery that go together. And the main thing about the Jhane Barnes approach is that it is a modernist approach to nature. For instance, she decided on the design for one fabric, named Aerial View, while she was noticing how the earth looked from an airplane. She has also been influenced by time spent in her country house, in South Salem.

“She looks a little like Dorothy Hamill,” a woman told us before we actually saw Jhane Barnes for ourself.

We paced ourself. We did not rush to see Jhane Barnes right away. Instead, we took the opportunity, which was beautifully laid before us, to look at thousands of tiny pieces of fabric. Rarely can one see so many subtle gradations of the same thing as we were able to see at the Knoll showroom. One whole wall was covered with tiny pieces of fabric. The subtle interweaving! The blues! The greens! We did take *some* time off from looking at the tiny pieces, though, and in an adjacent room we found a black ladder upon which had been placed six Jhane Barnes shirts. "You see her clothing in Bloomingdale's. Sweaters, jackets, ties," a man said, almost whispering.

Then we went to look at other tiny pieces of fabric, which we liked very much. Some were arranged on a small group of lacquered chairs, and they sat there with such dignity. It was like the man's near-whisper—"Sweaters, jackets, ties."

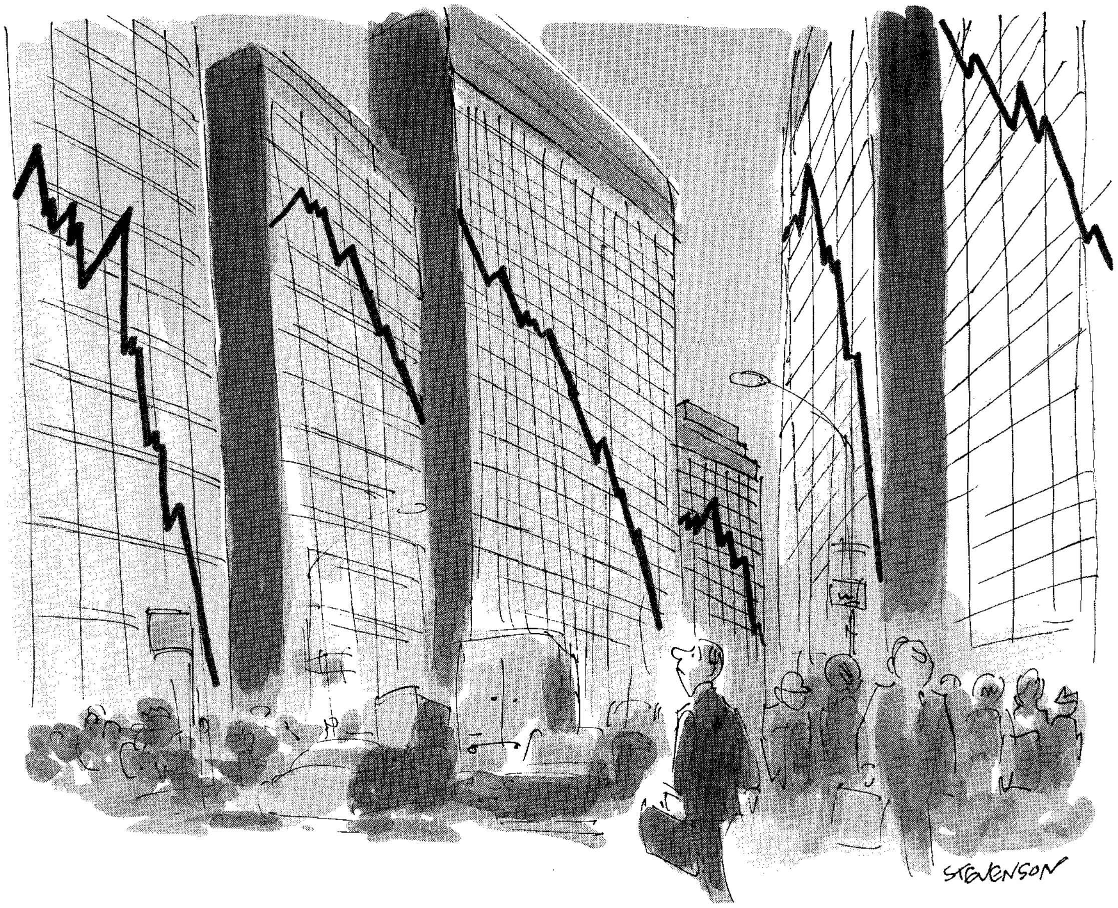
Now we saw Jhane Barnes herself. She actually stood on a table that was a component of the Knoll-designed-and-manufactured Morrison Network System to deliver a small speech, and *this*, we think, reflects the interest in juxtaposition which was always a characteristic of modernist thinking. While looking at Jhane Barnes, we found ourself in a mood for looking at the whole spectrum of *everything*. There was the collapse of the Hohenzollerns to think about, and the almost radical adjustment Knoll was trying to make to the radical solution Walter Gropius had found, and there was Jhane Barnes herself, who is young and has very thick red-blond hair cut short. Her hair is the kind of hair that swings. And she has pale-green eyes. And there she was, standing on a Morrison Network component table, in this potentially unforgiving atmosphere, having designed ties, jackets, and sweaters that had been and were still being coveted by people. We met a young man named Joe MacIsaac, a Knoll sales representative, and he turned his tie over and there it was—a Jhane Barnes label. The tie was dark maroon, with small gold and blue geometric shapes on it.

Moon Trip

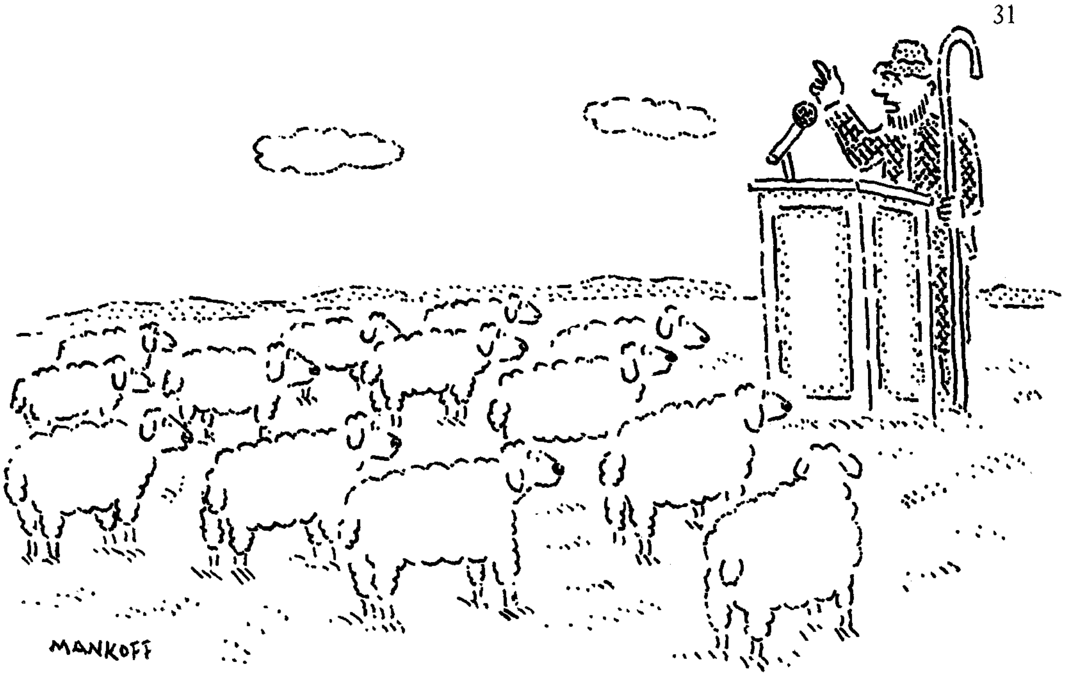
AT the very moment the New York street-festival season was beginning to seem like one gigantic Pennsylvania funnel cake, we ran across the Big Lee Moon Trip. The Moon Trip is not for sale. It is not a Simpsons T-shirt, a slap bracelet, a neon-green ripstop-nylon hip pouch, a souvlaki sandwich, a Dianetics handbook, a six-pack of tube socks, a neon-pink terry-cloth-covered hairband, a pair of fake-gold Cleopatra hoop earrings, a calzone, a recently boosted and repackaged cassette player, or fudge. The Moon Trip is, therefore, a street-festival anomaly.

The Moon Trip is an amusement ride, forty-five years old and currently bright-red with yellow racing stripes. It is shaped like a huge beach bucket, is lined with seats (capacity eighteen), and is suspended from a ten-foot-high steel sawhorse mounted on a red Chevy one-ton pickup. Its only motion is back and forth, like that of an oversized porch swing. It is not, technically speaking, scary. At no point in the Moon Trip's functioning does a three-dimensional hologram of Michael Jackson come into view. It does not have two hundred feet of vertical drop or four thousand feet of coiled-steel track or a computer-plotted course of corkscrews and double loops. It more closely recalls something that might have emerged after several hours in the basement workshop with some sheet metal, some rivets, and some 1945 issues of *Popular Mechanics*. Its only moving parts are Big Johnny, Little Johnny, and Doug—three Jack La Lanne-style guys who take turns loading the kids and rocking the bucket—and Big Lee, who every weekend from the spring through the late fall pilots the Moon Trip to street festivals, block parties, and the occasional executively produced bar mitzvah.

Every now and again, Big Lee considers adding another ride to his lineup—the Whip, maybe—but for the moment he likes to describe his capital-improvement plans as being at a standstill. Recently, at the Atlantic Antic, in Brooklyn, he explained his position. "For the time being, the Moon Trip is plenty," he said. "I used to have the pitch game, the novelties, the fishbowl games, the tossing the plates, the parakeets—the whole you-name-it. Now I've got the Moon Trip, and we sell helium balloons. Sum



total. The Whip is a maybe, but, right now, just a maybe. A Ferris wheel is another maybe. Currently, I'm sticking with the Moon Trip. It occupies my mind."



"My platform can be summarized in a single word: Leadership!"

A tall woman with a distracted manner walked up to Big Lee, who was sitting on an upended milk crate several yards away from the Moon Trip—a position that allowed him, with a minimum of movement, to manage the balloon concession and make change for his son Mark, who was selling Moon Trip tickets. The Moon Trip is often the only ride at a street festival. That was the case at the Atlantic Antic, and it had attracted a fidgety crowd of about forty kids. The parents stood in a disorderly semicircle a few feet away from the truck. One mother was saying, to no one in particular, "Tito just had a Sno-Kone. I hope this doesn't turn into a disaster."

The distracted woman asked Big Lee if he was interested in buying a king- or queen-size cotton comforter. He ignored her. Then an Asian woman carrying a small spotted dog and a Batman balloon came up to him and asked if she could get stronger gas put in the balloon for free.

Big Lee shook his head and said, "Sorry. These days, everyone's in business."

Monday through Friday, the Moon Trip is stored at an undisclosed site in South Brooklyn, and Big Lee runs a parking lot at an undisclosed site in downtown Brooklyn. Twenty-five years ago, he was running a different parking lot, went broke, started driving a cab, and then answered an ad for a Whip helper. He drove the Whip for [illegible] months. That job, besides providing Big Lee with gainful employment, partly satisfied a theretofore thwarted dream he'd had of running away to the circus.

"I always had this idea," he said, pointing at the Moon Trip, which was now loaded with eighteen kids, all screaming in syncopation with its swings. "Nothing sentimental. I knew there was money in it was all. When I was driving the Whip, I got to know where the amusement people hung around, which is a slightly different location from where I hang around. The man who owned the ride had a Mister Softee concession. He just had the ride lying around. I took my savings and I bought it. It was called the SwingAway then. I changed the name myself. Moon I thought of because they had just sent someone to the moon at that time. Trip I just picked at random, and because people talked a lot about trips in those days."

For a decade or so, Big Lee provided most of the muscle power for the Moon Trip. Then he hired his helpers and acquired the physique of someone often in repose. He is now about fifty years old, and has slicked-back black hair, a saggy smile, ruddy coloring, and less than perfect posture. He usually wears a pastel polo shirt, jeans, and a thick silver neck chain to the festivals. Big Johnny wears a Playboy pendant. Little Johnny wears hoop earrings. Doug wears a baseball cap. Mark says, "I'm in school studying recreational therapy. What do you think—I'm going to make this my *career*?"

While filling a balloon, Big Lee decided to outline his business philosophy. First, pick the paint colors for the Moon Trip yourself, so you make sure they're cheerful. Second, you can get rid of the tossing the plates, the pitch game, the parakeets—the whole you-name-it—but balloons will always be good to you. Third, don't pick weaklings as helpers. Fourth, don't hang around any particular festival too long, because people will get to know you. Fifth, don't tell your neighbors that you have a ride, because they'll be asking you to bring it over every other night for barbecues, pool parties, Jennifer's sweet-sixteen bash, or whatever. Sixth, wash and Simonize the Moon Trip once a week, so it always looks presentable. Finally, push *hard*, because the louder the kids scream, the easier it is for people to find you at the festivals.

"Also, don't put fat kids on the bottom row," he added. "I got two fat ones stuck there once. Now I say eighteen will fit, *depending*. But this is a good money-maker ride. It's actually *fun*. I go up in it once every year to see how it's doing. It's old-fashioned, but it has a broad range. I always say, 'The Moon Trip—for kids of all ages, master of none.' "

Behind him, Big Johnny had stopped the ride in mid-swing so that a little boy with a flattop could disembark.

"He got scared," Big Johnny called to Big Lee, and he added, under his breath, "Man, by the time I get home I don't even want to see my *own* kids."

Big Lee shrugged. "It's almost the end of the season," he said. "Just a few more festivals. Then we go south. I mean, *I* go south. The Moon Trip stays here."

ZEUS THE LUTHERAN

WHEN Hera's lawyer, Alan, had lunch with Zeus that Wednesday at the Acropol, it certainly crossed his mind that the ageless gentleman in the blue T-shirt and white shorts sitting across the table from him and smelling of juniper was the Father of Heaven (and of the Seasons, the Fates, and the Muses) and the father of Athena and Apollo and Artemis and Dionysus, plus the father of Hephaestus by Hera, his wife, and of Eros by his daughter Aphrodite—a guy who didn't take no for an answer. So Alan felt silly saying, "Hello. How are you?" He knew the answer: *Great, all-powerful*. For aeons, Zeus had done exactly as he wished, following the amorous impulses of his heart, changing himself into a swan or a horse or Lord knows what for the purpose of making love with whomever he wanted. Now Alan had been hired to talk some sense into him.

"I realize you're omniscient, but let me say what's on my mind," he said. "Enough with the mounting and coupling. Keep it in your pants. What are you trying to prove? You're a *god*, for Pete's sake. Be a little divine for a change. Knock it off with the fornication, O.K.?"

"You want to see a magic trick?" said Zeus. And right there at the table he turned the young lawyer into a pitcher of vinaigrette dressing and poured him over the spinach salad and told the waiter, "Take this garbage away, Dimitri, and feed it to the pigs. And bring me a beautiful young woman, passionate but compliant, with small, ripe breasts." It was his usual way of dealing with opposition: senseless violence followed by easy sex.

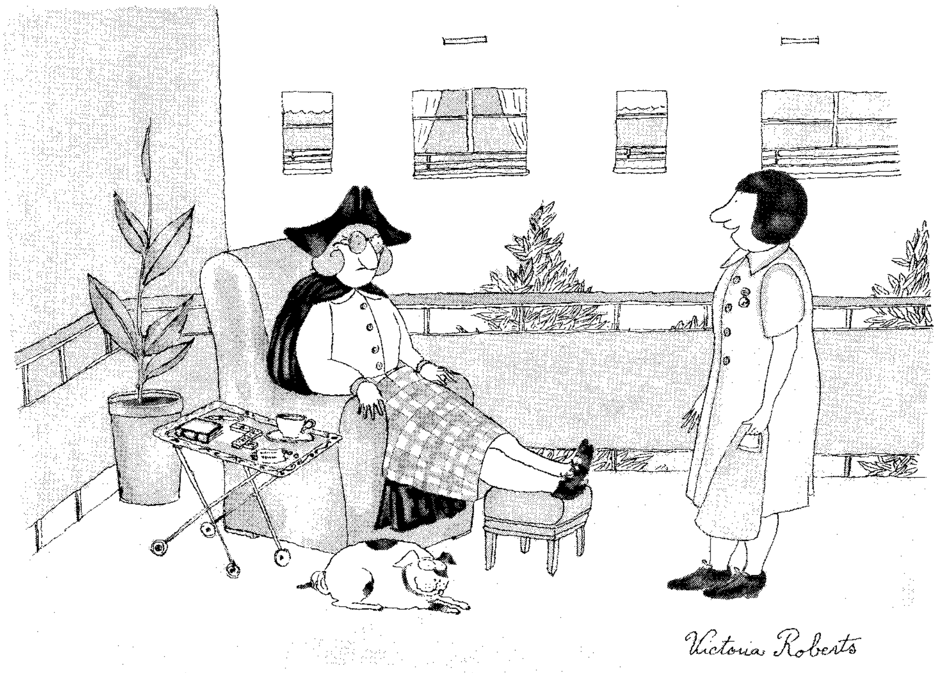
Hera was swimming laps in the pool at her summer house when she got the tragic news from Victor, Alan's partner. She was hardly surprised; Alan was her six-hundredth lawyer in fourteen centuries. She climbed out of the water, her great alabaster rump rising like Antarctica, and wrapped herself in a vast white towel. "Some god!" she said. "Omniscient except when it comes to himself." She had thought she understood Zeus' fascination with mortal women until the day he tried to explain it to her. "The spirit of love is the cosmic teacher who brings gods and mortals together, lighting the path of beauty, which is both mortal and godly, from one generation to the next," he offered. "One makes love so that people in years to come can feel passion at the sight of flowers."

She said, "You're not that drunk—don't be that stupid."

When Victor told her that Alan was gone, eaten by pigs, she vowed to avenge him, but the next day she was in Thebes, being adored, when Diane sailed into the harbor at Rhodes aboard the S.S. Bethel with her husband, Pastor Wes. Zeus, who was drinking coffee in a dockside café with the passionate, compliant woman and was a little bored with her breasts, which now seemed slightly too small and perhaps a touch overripe, saw Diane overhead as the Bethel tied up, and he felt the old, familiar itch in the groin—except sharper. He arose. Her strawberry-blond hair and great tan made his heart come over the top of the Ferris wheel. She stood at the rail, in a bright-red windbreaker, furious at the chubby man in the yellow pants who was laying his big arm on her shoulder—her hubby of sixteen years. She turned, and the arm fell off her. Zeus paid the check and headed for the gangplank.

Wes and Diane were on the final leg of a two-week cruise that the grateful congregation of Zion Lutheran Church in Odense, Pennsylvania, had given them in tribute to Wes's ten years of ministry, and last night, over a rack of lamb and a 1949 Bordeaux that cost enough to feed fifty Ugandan children for a week, they had talked about their good life back in Odense, their three wonderful children, their good health and good luck, their kind fellow-Lutherans, and had somehow got onto the subject of divine grace, and that led into a discussion of pretentious clergy Diane had known, and that led to a twelve-foot dropoff into the wild rapids of a bitter argument about their marriage. They leaned across the baklava, quietly yelling things like "How can you say that?" and "I always knew you felt that way!" until the diners nearby were studying the ceiling for hairline cracks. In the morning, Diane announced that she wanted a separation. Now Wes gestured at the blue sea, the white houses, the fishing boats. "This is the dream trip of a lifetime," he said. "We can't come all this way to Greece just to break up. We could have

"The after-dinner mint is the boss's idea. I think it's superfluous."



"I got your Postum, but they were right out of twenty-five-cent Marianne Moore stamps."

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done that at home. *Why are you so angry?*" And then the god entered his body.

It took three convulsive seconds for Zeus to become Wes; it felt to the fifty-year-old minister like a fatal heart attack. *Oh, shit!* he thought. *Death*. And he had quit smoking three years before! All that self-denial and hard work—and for what? For zip. He was going to fall down dead anyway. Tears filled his eyes. Then Zeus took over, and the soul of Wes dropped into an old dog named Spiros, who lived on the docks and suffered from a bad hernia.

The transformation shook Zeus up, too. He grabbed at the rail and nearly fainted; in the last hour, Wes had consumed a shovelful of bacon and fried eggs and many cups of dreadful coffee. The god was nauseated, but he touched the woman's porcelain wrist.

"*What*?" she said.

The god coughed. He tried to focus Wes's watery blue eyes. "O Lady whose beauty lights the darkening western skies, your white face flashes when I close my eyes."

She sighed and looked down at the concrete dock. The god swallowed. He wanted to talk beautifully, but English sounded raspy, dull; it tasted like a cheap cigar.

"A face of such reflection as if carved in stone, and such beauty as only in great paintings shone. O Lady of light, fly no higher, but come into my bed and know eternal fire."

"Where'd you get that? Off a calendar? Be real," she said.

The dumb mustache, the poofy hair, the brass medallion, the collapsed chest, the wobbly gut, the big lunkers of blubber on his hips, the balloon butt. The arms were weak, the legs shaky. The brain seemed corroded, stuffed with useless, sad, remorseful thoughts. He wished he could change to somebody trim and taut, an athlete, but he could feel the cold, wiggly flesh glued on him and he knew that Hera had caught him in the naked moment of metamorphosis and with a well-aimed curse had locked him tight inside the flabby body, this clown sack. A god of grandeur and gallantry living in a dump, wearing a mask of pork.

Just below, the dog sat on his haunches—a professional theologian covered with filthy, matted fur, and with his breakfast, the rancid hindquarters of a rat, dangling from his mouth.

"Look. That poor old dog on the dock," said Diane.

"When you open your thighs, the soft clanging of bells is heard across the valley, O daughter of Harrisburg. Come, glorious woman, and let us waken the day with the music of your clamorous thighs."

"Grow up," she advised.

His innards rumbled, and a bubble of gas shifted in his belly—a fart as big as a child. He clamped his bowels around it and faced her and spoke: "Dear, dear Lady, O Sweetness—the cheerful face of amiable passion in a cold, dry place. To you I offer a thousand tears and lies, an earnest heart longing for the paradise that awaits us in a bed not far away, I trust. Look at me, Lady, or else I turn to dust." His best effort. But the language was so flat, and the pastoral voice so clunky and ponderous.

"I could swear that dog is human," she cried.

"Thank you, Diane," said the dog. "I don't know how I became schizophrenic, but I do know I've never loved you more." This came from his mouth as a whine, and then he felt the rubber boot of a vicious dockhand kick him in the middle of the hernia. The woman rushed down the gangplank and knelt and picked him up and cradled him in her arms. She crooned, "Oh, honey, precious, baby, sweetness, Mama gonna be so good to you, little darling." She had never said this to him before. He felt small and cozy in her arms.

THE dog, the woman, and the god rode a bus three miles over the mountain to the Sheraton Rhodes, the woman holding the dog's head on her lap. She'd leave Wes and go back to school for her degree in women's studies—the simple life of the student, a tonic after all these years of ordinary lying. The god vowed to fast until she surrendered to him. The dog felt no pain. He planned to find a pack of Luckies and learn how to smoke again.

The hotel room had twin beds and looked out on a village of stucco houses with small gardens of tomato plants and beans, where chickens strolled among the vines. Brown goats roamed across the brown hills, their bells clanging softly. Diane undressed in the bathroom, and slid into bed sideways, and lay facing the wall. Zeus sat on the edge of her bed and lightly traced with his finger the neckline of her white negligee. She shrugged. The dog lay at her feet, listening. Zeus was confused, trying to steer his passion through the narrow, twisting mind of Wes. All he wanted was to make love enthusiastically for hours, but dismal Lutheran thoughts sprang up: Go to sleep. Stop making a fool of yourself. You're a grown man. Settle down. Don't be ridiculous. Who do you think you are?

Zeus pulled in his gut and spoke. "Lady, your quiet demeanor mocks the turmoil in my chest, the rage, the foam, the wind blasting love's light ships aground. Surely you see this, Lady, unless you are the cruellest of your race. Surely you hear my heart pound with mounting waves upon your long, passive shore. Miles from your coast, you sit in a placid town, feeling faint reverberations from beneath the floor. It is your lover the sea, who can never rest until you come down to him."

"I don't know who you're trying to impress, me or yourself," she said. Soon she was snoring.

"This is not such a bad deal," said the dog. "For me, this is turning out to be a very positive experience on the whole. Becoming a dog was never my first choice, but now that I am one I see that, as a man, my sense of self was tied up with being an oppressor. I got separated from my beingness, my creaturehood. It is so liberating to see things from down here at floor level. You learn a lot about man's relentlessness."

They spent two sunny days at the Sheraton, during which Zeus worked to seduce Diane and she treated him like a husband. She laughed at him. The lines that had worked for him in the past ("Sex is a token of a deeper friendship, an affirmation of mutual humanity, an extension of conversation") made her roll her eyes and snort. She lay on a wicker lounge beside the pool—her taffy-colored skin in the two red bands of bikini, her perfect breasts, her long, tan legs with a pale golden fuzz. Her slender hands held a book called "The Concrete Shoes of Motherhood."

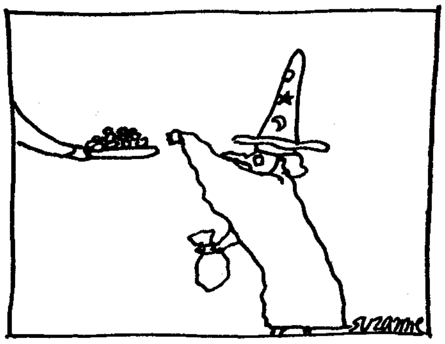
"Let's take a shower. They have a sauna. Let me give you a backrub. Let's lie down and take a nap," he said.

"Cheese it," she said. "Amscray. Make tracks. Get smaller."

Zeus could hear his fellow-gods hooting and cackling up on Olympus. (The Father of Heaven! Shot Down! Given the Heave-Ho! By a Housewife!) He lost eighteen pounds. He ran twenty-one miles every morning. He shaved off the mustache. She refused to look at him, but, being a god, he could read her thoughts. She was interested. She hiked over the dry brown hills and he walked behind and sang songs to her:

Lady, your shining skin will slide on
  mine,
Your breasts tremble with gladness.
Your body, naked, be clad in sweet oils,
And rise to the temple of Aphrodite,
Where you will live forever, no more
Lutheran but venerated by mortals.
This I pledge.

She pretended not to hear, sweeping the horizon with her binoculars, looking for rare seabirds. Zeus thought, I should have been a swan. The dog trotted along, his hernia cured by love. She had named him Sweetness. "You go ahead and use my body as long as you like," he said to Zeus. "You're doing wonders for it. I never looked so good until you became me. No kidding."



They didn't make love until they got on the plane and were almost to America. They hit turbulence over Newfoundland. The plane bucked in the boiling black clouds, the seat-belt light flashed on, they tipped and plunged and rattled, people shrieked. "We're going to die," Diane said. "I love you. Let's take our laps around the track, big boy." So they undressed under the thin blankets, unfastened their seat belts, and made steady and joyous love, two travellers across life's tumultuous sky joined in life's great mutual gift, until, just as the plane hit the concrete at Kennedy and bounced and touched down and rolled to a stop, Diane shuddered and moaned and raked his back with her nails. She said nothing. She was clearly moved. Not until they were in the terminal and had got their bags and passed customs and come through the crowd did she whisper to him, "That was so nice I could do it again, I bet."

Zeus didn't think he could. He felt

GATHERING APRICOTS

In the sun, while there, below, over the bay
Only clouds of white mist wander, fleeting,
And the range of hills is grayish on the blue,
Apricots, the whole tree full of them, in the dark leaves,
Glimmer, yellow and red, bringing to mind
The garden of the Hesperides and apples of Paradise.
I reach for a fruit and suddenly feel the presence
And put aside the basket and say: "It's a pity
That you died and cannot see these apricots,
While I celebrate this undeserved life."

COMMENTARY
Alas, I did not say what I should have.
I submitted fog and chaos to a distillation.
That other kingdom of being or non-being
Is always with me and makes itself heard
With thousands of calls, screams, complaints,
And she, the one to whom I turned,
Is perhaps but a leader of a chorus.
What happened only once does not stay in words.
Countries disappeared and towns and circumstances.
Nobody will be able to see her face.
And form itself as always is a betrayal.

—CZESLAW MILOSZ

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

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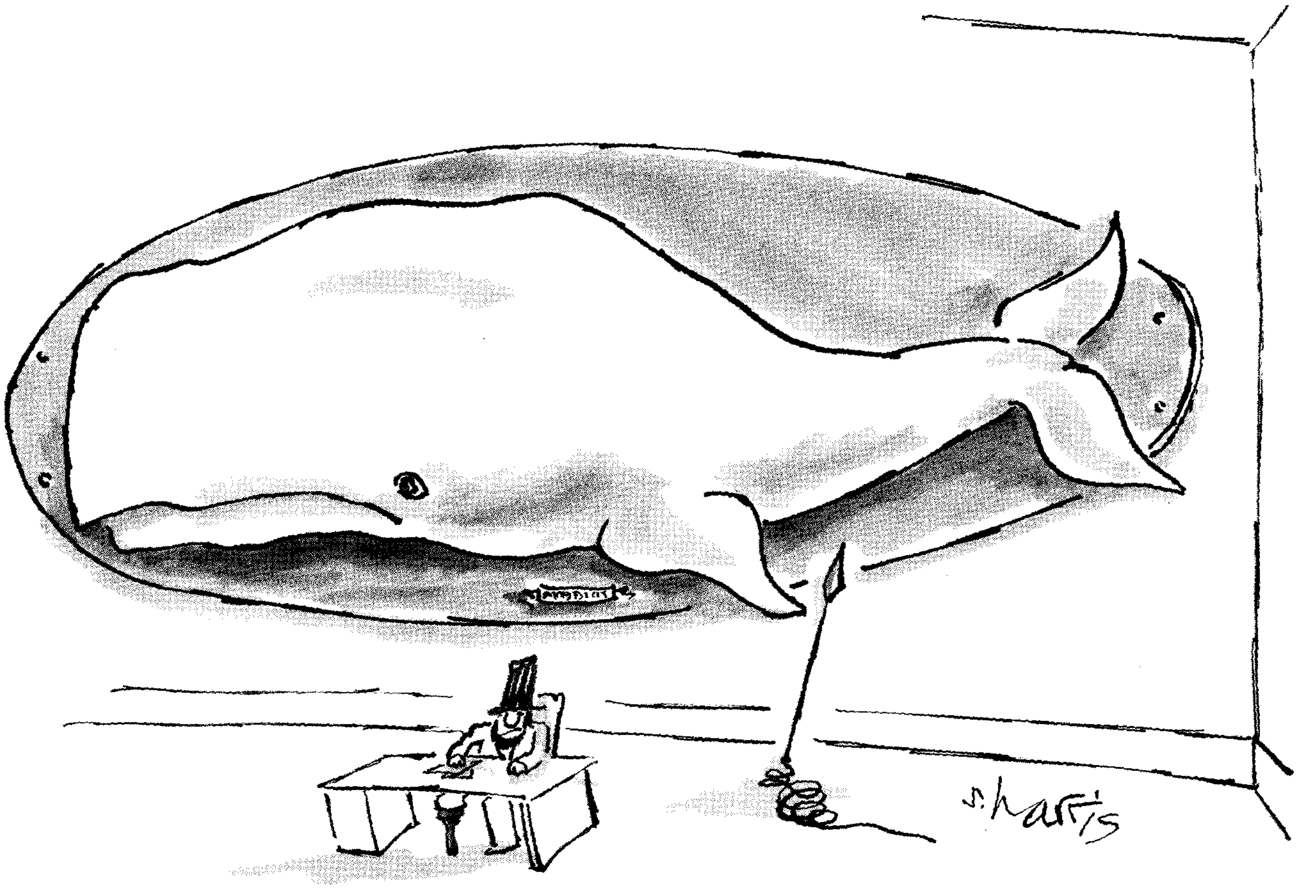


weak and listless. Diane carried the bags, and he led the dog, who emerged from the baggage room dopey and confused. Zeus collapsed into the back seat of a van driven by a burly man named Vern, who, Zeus gathered, was his brother. "Wes is pretty jet-lagged," Diane told him, but the man yammered on and on about virtually nothing. "Hope you had a good trip," he said. Yes, they said, they had. "Always wanted to go over there myself," he said. "But things come up. You know." He talked for many miles about what he had done instead of going to Greece: resodding, finishing the attic, adding on a bedroom, taking the kids to Yellowstone. *Do we have kids?* Zeus wondered. "Four," said the dog, beaming. "Great kids. I can't wait for you to meet them, Mister." Then he dropped his chin on the seat and groaned. "The littlest guy is murder on animals. One look at me, he'll have me in a headlock until my eyeballs pop." He groaned again. "I forgot about Mojo. Our black Lab." His big brown eyes filled with tears. "I've come home in disgrace to die like a dog," he said. "I feed Mojo for ten years and now he's going to go for my throat. It's too hard." The god told him to buck up, but the dog brooded all the way home, and when Vern pulled up to the garage behind the little green house and Diane climbed out, the dog tore off down the street and across a playground and disappeared. Vern and Zeus cruised the streets for half an hour searching for the mutt, Zeus with gathering apprehension, even panic. Without Wes to resume being Wes, he figured, he couldn't get out of Wes and back into Zeus.

Vern went home for a warm jacket (he said, but Zeus guessed he was tired and would find some reason not to come back). The god strode across yards, through hedges, crooning, "Sweetness! Sweetness!" The yards were cluttered with machines, which he threw aside. *Sweetness!*

The dog was huddled by an incinerator behind the school. He had coached boys' hockey here for ten years. "I'm so ashamed," he wept. The god held him tightly in his arms. "To be a dog in a foreign place is one thing, but to come home and have to crawl around—" He was a small dog, but he sobbed like a man—deep, convulsive cries.

Zeus was about to say, "Oh, it's not all that bad," and then he felt a feathery hand on his shoulder. Actually, a wing. It was Victor, Hera's old lawyer, in a blue pin-striped suit and two transparent wings like a locust's. Zeus tried to turn him into a kumquat, but the man only chuckled. "Heh, heh, heh. Don't waste my time. You wanna know how come you feel a little limp? Lemme tell ya. Hera is ex*treme*ly upset, Mr. Z. Frankly, I don't know if godhood is something you're ever going to experience again. It wouldn't surprise me that much if you spent the rest of recorded time as a frozen meatball."

"What does she want?"

"She wants what's right. Justice. She wants half your power. No more, no less."

"Divide power? Impossible. It wouldn't be power if I gave it up."

"O.K. Then see how you like *these* potatoes."

He snatched up the dog, and his wings buzzed as he zoomed up, and over the pleasant rooftops of Odense.

"Wait!" the god cried. "Forty-five per cent!" But his voice was thin and whispery. On the way home, he swayed, his knees caved in, he had to hang on to a mailbox. For three days, Zeus was flat on his back, stunned by monogamy: what a cruel fate for a great man! Diane waited on him hand

and foot; children hung around, onlookers at the site of a disaster. They clung to him, they squeezed in next to him on the couch, fighting over the choice locations. They stank of sugar. He could not get their names straight. Melissa and Donnie (or Sean or Jon), or Melinda and Randy, and the fat one was Penny, and the little one's name began with an "H". He called him Hector, and the little boy cried. "Go away," the god snapped. "You are wretched and vile and disgusting. I'm sorry. It's the truth. I'm dying, I think. Let me die in peace. Bug off." The older boy wept: something about a promise, a trip to see something, a purchase—Zeus couldn't understand him. "Speak up!" he said, but the boy blubbered and bawled, his soft lemur-like face slimy with tears and mucus. The god swung down his legs and sat up on the couch and raised his voice: "I am trapped here, a being fallen from a very high estate indeed—you have no idea—and what I see around me *I do not want.*"

Everybody felt lousy, except Diane. "It's only jet lag!" she cried, bringing in a tray of cold, greasy, repulsive food, which he could see from her smile was considered a real treat here. He ate a nugget of cheese and gagged.

"You'll feel better tomorrow," she said.

Later, Penny, the fat girl, asked him if Greece was as dirty as they said. She asked if he and Mom had had a big fight. She asked why he felt trapped. She wanted to hear all the bad news.

"I felt crazy the moment we landed in America. The air is full of piercing voices, thousands of perfectly normal, handsome, tall people talk-talk-talk-talk-talking away like chickadees, and I can hear each one of them all the time and they make me insane. You're used to this, I'm not. *What do you people have against silence?* Your country is so beautiful, and it is in the grip of invincible stupidity. The President is a habitual liar and a hack, and the Vice-President is a raging idiot," he said. "The country is inflamed with debt and swollen with blight and trash, and the government is in the hands of people who lack the brains and integrity to run a small plumbing shop, and they'll be in power until 1997, and then it won't matter much."

"How can you say that, Dad?"

"Because I'm omniscient."

"You are?"

"I know everything. It's a fact." She looked at him with a level gaze, not smirking, not pouting, an *intelligent* child. The only one prepared to understand him.

"Do my homework," she whispered. He whipped off dozens of geometry exercises, algebra, trigonometry, in a flash. He identified the nations of Africa, the law of averages, the use of the dative. "You are *so smart*," she said.

Diane packed the kids off to bed. "Now," she said, "where's that guy I rode home with on the plane?"

How could she understand? Passion isn't an arrangement, it's an accident, and the guy on the plane was history.

She wanted him to see a therapist, but Zeus knew he was going back to Olympus. He just had to talk Hera down a little.

HE drove to the church, with Penny snuggled at his side. The town lay in a river valley, the avenues of homes extending up and over the hills like branches laden with fruit. The church stood on a hill, a red brick hangar with a weathervane for a steeple, a sanctuary done up with fake beams and mosaics, and a plump secretary with piano legs, named Tammy. She cornered him, hugged him, and fawned like a house afire. "Oh, Pastor Wes, we missed you so much! I've been reading your sermons over and over—they're so spirit-filled! We've got to publish them in a book!" She squealed.

"Go home," said Zeus. "Put your head under cold water." He escaped from the sanctuary into the study and slammed the door. The dog sat in the big leather chair behind the long desk. He cleared his throat. "I'd be glad to help with the sermon for tomorrow," he said. "I think your topic has got to be change—the life-affirming nature of change, the Christian's willingness to accept and nurture change."

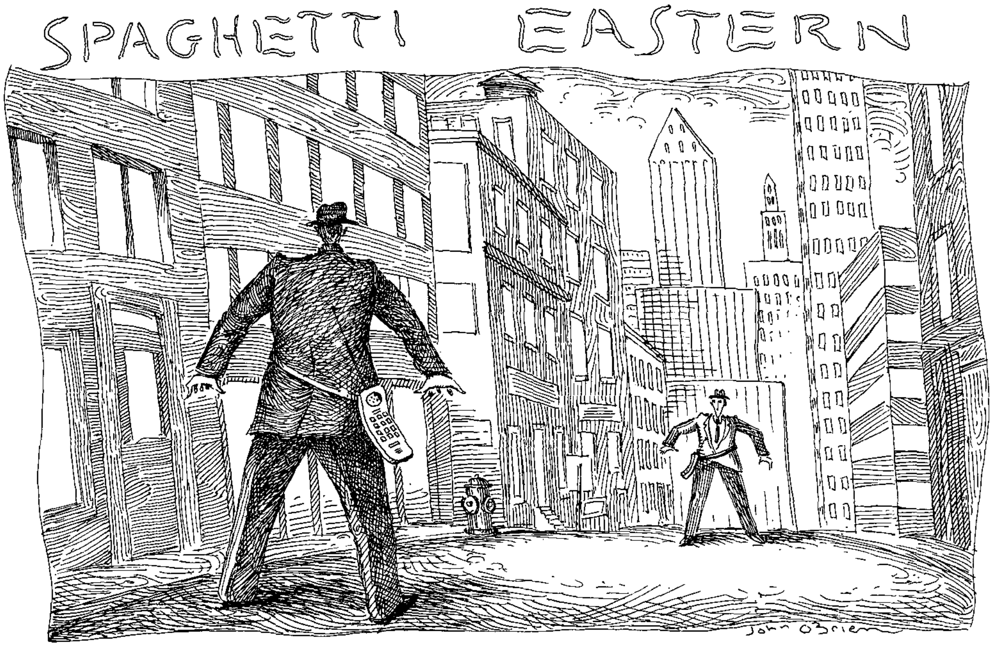
"That's a lot of balloon juice," said Zeus. He caught a look at himself in a long mirror that stood in a closet full of robes: a powerful, handsome, tanned fellow in a white collar. Not bad.

"You sure you want to leave tomorrow?"

"That's the deal I made with Victor. Didn't he tell you?"

"You couldn't stay until Monday? This town needs shaking up. I always wanted to do it and didn't know how, and now you could preach on Sunday and it'd be a wonderful experience for all of us."

"You're a fool," Zeus said. "This is not a TV show. Your people are dying. This is not a long-term problem, and the answer to it is not the willingness to accept change. You need heart, but you're Lutherans, and you go along with things. We know this from history. You're in danger and months will pass and it'll get worse, but you won't change your minds. You'll sit and wait. Lutherans are fifteen per cent faith and eighty-five per cent loyalty. They are nobody to lead a



"Don't you just love them when they're that age?"

revolt. Your country is coming apart."

The dog looked up at the god with tears in his brown eyes. "Please tell my people," he whispered.

"Tell them yourself."

"They won't believe me."

"Neither do I."

"Love me," Diane told Zeus that night in bed. "Forget yourself. Forget that we're Lutheran. Hurl your body off the cliff into the dark abyss of wild, mindless, passionate love." But he was too tired. He couldn't find the cliff. He seemed to be on a prairie. In the morning, he hauled himself out of bed and dressed in a brown suit and white shirt. He peered into the closet. "These your only ties?" he asked the dog. The dog nodded.

Zeus glanced out the bedroom window to the east, to a beech tree by the garage, where a figure with waxen wings was sitting on a low limb. He said, silently, "Be with you in one minute." He limped into the kitchen and found Diane in the breakfast nook, eating bran flakes and reading an article in the Sunday paper about a couple who are able to spend four days a week in their country home now that they have a fax machine. He brushed her cheek with his lips and whispered, "O you woman, farewell, you sweet, sexy Lutheran love of my life," and jumped out of Wes and into the dog, loped out the back door, and climbed into Victor's car.

"She'll be glad to hear you're coming," said Victor. "She misses you. I'm sorry you'll have to make the return flight in a small cage, doped on a heavy depressant, and be quarantined for sixty days in Athens, both July and August, but after that things should start to get better for you."

At eleven o'clock, having spent the previous two hours tangled in the sheets with his amazing wife, Wes stood in the pulpit and grinned. The church was almost half full, not bad for July, and the congregation seemed glad to see him. "First of all, Diane and I want to thank you for the magnificent gift of the trip to Greece, which will be a permanent memory, a token of your generosity and love," he said. "A tremendous thing happened on the trip that I want to share with you this morning. For the past week, I have lived in the body of a dog while an ancient god lived with Diane and made love to her."

He didn't expect the congregation to welcome this news, but he was unprepared for their stony looks: they stood up and pointed and glared at him as if he were a criminal. They cried out, "Get down out of that pulpit, you filth, you!"

"Why are you so hostile?" he said.

Why are you so hostile? The lamp swayed as the ship rolled, and Diane said, "Why so hostile? Why? You want to know why I'm hostile? Is that what you're asking? About hostility? My hostility to you? O.K. I'll answer your question. Why I'm hostile—right? Me. Hostile. I'll tell you why. Why are you smiling?"

He was smiling, of course, because it was a week ago—they were in Greece, and God had kindly allowed him one more try. He could remember exactly the horrible words he'd said the first time, and this time he did not have to say them and become a dog. He was able to swallow the 1949 wine, and think, and say, "The sight of you fills me with tender affection and a sweet longing to be flat on my back in a dark, locked room with you naked, lying on top, kissing me, and me naked, too."

The lawyer and the dog rode to the airport in the limousine, and somewhere along the way Zeus signed a document that gave Hera half his power and promised absolute fidelity. "Absolute?" he woofed. "You mean 'total' in the sense of bottom line, right? A sort of basic faithfulness? Fidelity in principle? Isn't that what you mean here? The spirit of fidelity?"

"I mean *pure*," the lawyer said.

Zeus signed. The lawyer tossed him a small, dry biscuit. Zeus wolfed it down and barked. In the back of his mind, he thought maybe he'd find a brilliant lawyer to argue that the paw print wasn't a valid signature, but he wasn't sure. He thought about a twenty-four-ounce T-bone steak, and he wasn't sure he'd get that, either.

—GARRISON KEILLOR

MONUMENTS

AND, properly speaking, those weren't even the Eisenhower years. We liked Ike, but he came along at the very end, and by then everything was settled—we would move, the rhythm would be broken, Dad would give up sales and go off the road. But for those three years we lived out at the end of that Illinois subdivision, facing a creek, a cornfield, a patch of woods that was like a forest. . . . No, actually, we faced our neighbors; it was the back of the house that looked out on that open country—the back yard sloped down; there were two terraces that were hell to mow.

—A one- or two-car garage?

—Just one. Dad liked to park in front of the house, where he was in no danger of getting hemmed in if Mother came in after him. He had a green Studebaker and then a Dodge coupé, fire-engine red. It was unlike him to have anything fire-engine red.

—I miss Mel. I hope you believe me, I really do.

—You were barely born then.

—We had our disagreements over the years, I don't deny it. . . . Not so much with Mel . . .

—No.

—You know what I mean.

—Daughters- and fathers-in-law are supposed to like each other. It's a case of the "law" being less sticky than blood.

—Would it help if I said I know what you're going through? Even though my father is still alive?

—You don't know, but it helps. This isn't grief, by the way. It's the first respite. I'm taking the day off. I woke up this morning and I was . . . what? A ten-, eleven-, twelve-year-old boy. . . . I want to tell you about this. . . . I really think I should.

—Even though I was barely born.

—As "barely" as you'll ever be.

—Please.

—I woke up to the sun streaming in through the window and thought of a motel room, Dad asleep beside me. A weekday. That was unusual. Normally, he was home by Friday and gone on Monday, before I was even ready for school. One of the things I didn't understand until this morning was how gone he really had been, and how completely in charge of my world that left Mother.

—She spoiled you.

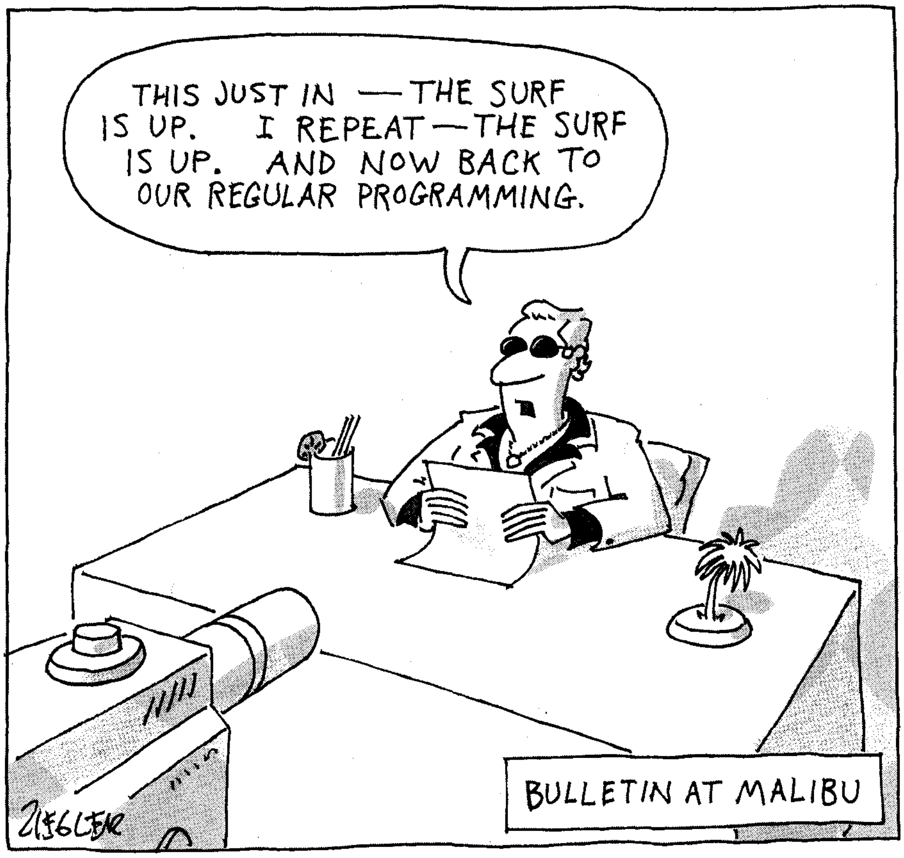
—No, I don't think that's what she did.

—Helen doted on you.

—That's not the same thing. There were nine other boys my age, give or take a year, who lived on my street. The street dead-ended a few houses down, so there was never any traffic to worry about. We had train tracks close by, where we could flatten pennies. There was a trestle over the creek. That creek had fish. There was this huge hemisphere of space filled in summer by the sound of wind in the corn, and always a smell more animal than vegetable. What Mother did was make that world available to me on a weekday basis. She called it "paradise for a boy."

—And that's not spoiling you? Making paradise available on a weekday basis?

—Around the bend from us lived a family called the Terwilligers. Let's start there. Instead of being one big, unbroken pane, their picture window was divided up, cottagestyle, into squares. Mother was standing there with Mrs. Terwilliger, whose name, I believe, was Barbara. Mother would be wearing a suit of some heavy, tweedy material, for it was November, and the recently sodded yards were slowly dissolving into mud. I don't know what started the fight. Three or four other boys were there, and we could have all been playing a game of king of the hill, but it had boiled down to Jim Hines, a boy from farther up the street and not really part of our group, and me. I charged up the Terwilligers' muddy, sloping, sodden yard and Hines, who had this rawboned look and stood a rangy half head taller than I did, even when he wasn't standing on a slant, knocked me back down. He was using his fists. Raging so, I had no idea of what damage he might be doing to my face and teeth. I just charged up the hill and Hines knocked me back down. On one of those charges I saw Mother. She was standing behind that picture window of square panes, shadowy, a bit back in the room, a coffee cup and saucer in her hand. This was the way she stood when she was putting herself to the test, or when she was coldly assessing something. One leg, the left, stood out at an angle from the rest of her body, like a buttress; her head would be cocked up slightly to the right, as if she had just heard a suspicious sound in the house. If someone like Barbara Terwilliger was around to push forward and stand with her nose


THIS JUST IN —THE SURF IS UP. I REPEAT—THE SURF IS UP. AND NOW BACK TO OUR REGULAR PROGRAMMING.
ZIEGLER
BULLETIN AT MALIBU

practically pressed to one of those panes, all the better. The day was gray, late afternoon; November at its purest, grimmest, quietest, most still. Now that I look closely, there must have been a fire in the Terwilligers' flagged fireplace, because light brightened and dimmed on the three-quarters of her face Mother had turned to me. Our eyes never met. She looked through me. She regarded me as part of the whole scene she took in, and that would include the train tracks, the creek, the woods, and the fields. It would also include this moment of rage, the cut lip, bruises, and the black eye, but she would not leap to single anything out. Mother prided herself on her ability to see an event from so many angles at once that it lost its shocking immediacy and confessed to what it was. She saw the larger picture, is what I'm trying to say. I had to live here. If I stood up and took my licks on that wet, overcast afternoon, tomorrow would be another day. There were licks to be taken, even in paradise.

—She was toughening you up. She was taking Mel's place while he was out on the road. Did Mel come back and teach you how to box?

—Dad came back with a bicycle, ice skates, a sled. . . . No, it was something else. They had it worked out between them so sensibly . . . so seamlessly. I mean, when Dad came home on Fridays and left on Mondays they really didn't let the seams show. So there was nothing to snag on, nothing to start the unravelling.

—But it's unravelled for you now?

—I've begun to see. It's as if they were engaged in an experiment.

—What kind of an experiment?

—I don't know. As if they were priests alternating in some mysterious rite.

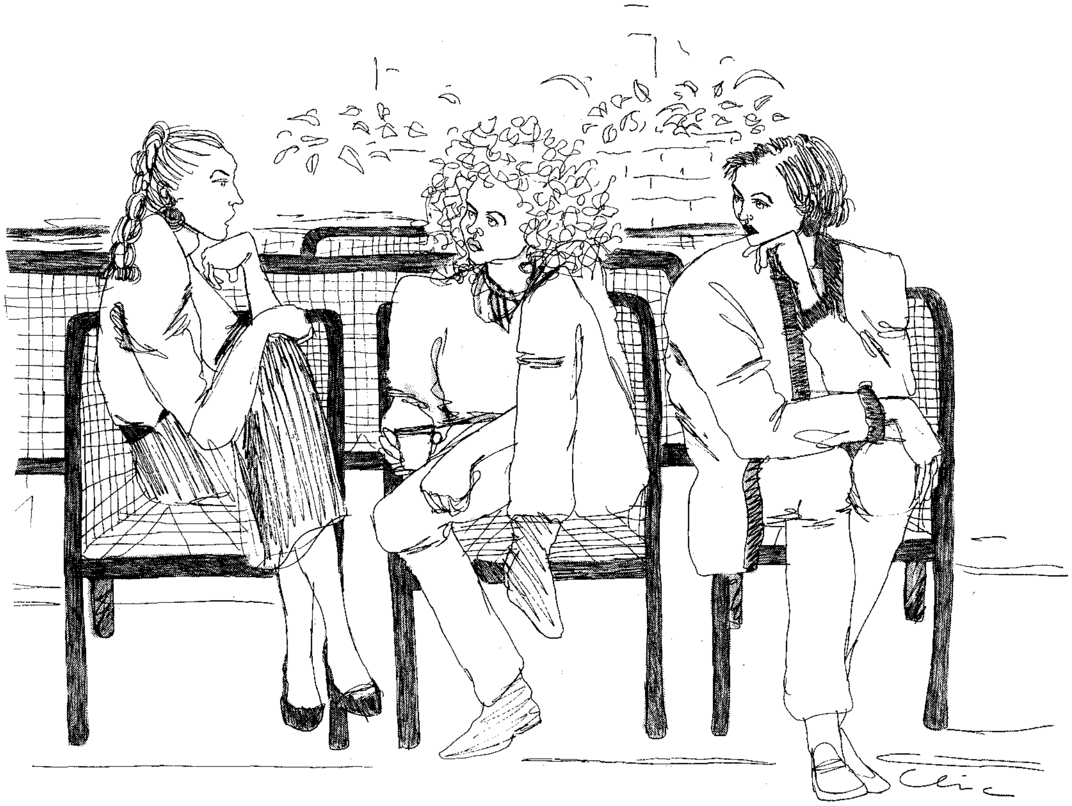
—Priests? Helen and Mel? Sweetheart, it's your suburban, middle-class boyhood you're talking about.

—Yes, I know—except that Mother was right, strangely and unnervingly right. I took my licking, and it was still all there for me the next day. Even though it was just a day in November when the woods were an ashen brown and the cornstalks lay in splintered rows of stumps the color of old toenails. I don't remember feeling my bruises or cuts or getting pointed at for my black eye. The leaves had come down and the fields opened up. Everything wore a film of gray, which meant that no one else wanted any of it—it was all mine, take it or leave it.

Or I could share it with my friends. We could choose up sides—my friends and I—or just let the sides take the shape of the day's rivalries, and position ourselves on opposite banks of the creek. The bullrushes there grow higher than your head. Because the ground is wet and the stalks are dead, they give easily if you grab near the bottom and pull straight up. The roots are always packed with mud. The mud weights the flight of the bullrush to the other side when you throw it as a spear. If it hits you it doesn't hurt—it spatters a bit, and at worst a speck of dirt might get into your eye. There are so many of them you can throw these bullrushes until your arm is sore, then you can trudge home, where your mother orders you to take off your dirty clothes and get into your bath. You can lie there and soak and watch the dirt leave its filmy circles around the tub as the water slowly drains out. From her kitchen window over her sink your mother has seen the bullrushes fill one little crescent of the November sky. It's bullrush dirt she's just put the soap to in your shirt. When she comes to the bathroom and stands looking down at you, you see no "naughty-boy, mother-brimming" sentimentality in her face. Once more she looks through you, sizes you up against the land she's just taken you out of, against the dirt you've left clinging to her tub.

—This is Helen you're talking about?

—Yes, but a Helen you never knew. You knew a busybody who couldn't keep her nose where it belonged, good-hearted but careful not to get taken for a ride, while I'm talking about a presence, permissive and protective at the same time, really an administrator who knew better than most what a bounty she had to portion out. With her friends she could be friendly and fun-loving enough, but also suspicious and insinuating and gossipy, and she never gave them the look she gave me. She drove around town with them, they



"I'm having a really great crisis."

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visited back and forth, they conferred on the answers to radio quiz games, which were the rage then. There'd be nights with the husbands at the piano when they'd sing some songs and take a drink. Politics could catch her interest, and little local flareups, about zoning or the school board, could arouse her indignation to the point that in the instant she blew the hottest she became someone to be feared. She socialized, she pitched in, she showed up. She fussed at me and laid down the law of the day when I was being selfish or a slob. But that look I'd get when she paid her periodic visits to my world—that look of serene and perfectly diffused intelligence that saw so much and then saw me in it—would be Greek to the women she shared conventional intimacies with, and back yards. By promising nothing that look promised so much more.

—Paradise?

—You have to understand, it was probably just a sewage creek and a street of tract houses with some stone facing to make them look good.

—I was brought up in suburbia, too, remember.

—Yes, but that was Connecticut and those were the sixties, and not for a minute could you look off at the horizon and think, It goes on forever, this will never end.

—We had a train, too.

—I know, a forty-minute ride into the city.

—Where we had fun, especially after my sister Dorothy got that apartment in the Village.

—We built two- and three-man clubhouses, which we named after baseball teams, or the most savage animals, or Indian tribes. There were ten of us, even when you excluded outsiders like Jim Hines, but we were constantly banding into smaller groups and feuding among ourselves. It helped to have grudges then. If two or three of us had it in for another kid, who could himself count on a couple of friends, that gave us a reason to build something to hide away and plot in. One winter we had a heavy snow, then high winds and a long freeze, and we discovered snowbanks blown up against the terraces where we could dig out tunnels and rooms.

—And where were the girls all this time?

—This is more about the boys. I haven't kept in touch with any of them. The names don't matter much to me now. For three years they were my tireless playmates, companions, and I don't want to have to try to fish them up out of the bog of middle age. The last thing I want to know is what they have "done" with their lives. They built clubhouses on construction sites farther down the street. If you made just the right use of those hills of dirt and concrete blocks, your clubhouse could be made unassailable; after you'd assured your security, you could allow yourself the luxury of stools and candle niches, little shelves with tin cans for your booty. The day your mother comes looking for you, squats down to fill the opening of your skillfully hinged door, will not be a day of shame, then, of infamy, an invasion, or an unmasking, or anything like that. It will be the day you've known all along was coming—perhaps the reason you talked the other club members into using the blue and yellow paint.

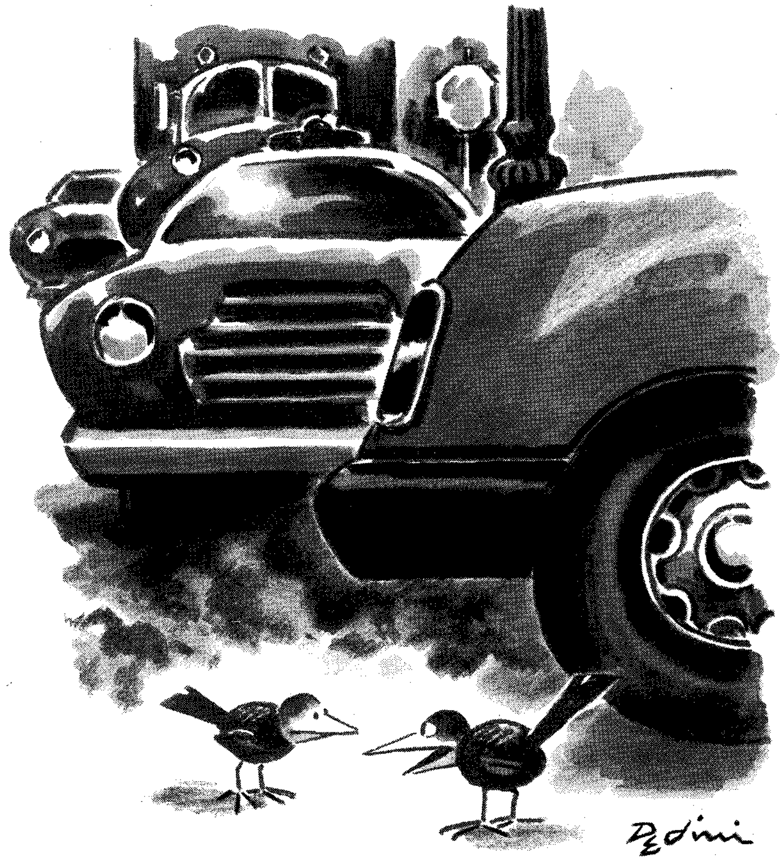
Mother squatted there looking in, then stood as I crawled out. There was some place we unexpectedly had to go. After this clubhouse there would be others; as the adults built their houses on down the street, so we built ours—from their leavings or their still untouched beginnings. That was the real point of Mother's visit. Instead of crawling inside to coo over the coziness of it all, she had me crawl out to where she could include me in the gaze she sent out over this particular construction site and all the sites to come. There was this abundance of brick, concrete blocks, and lumber; there was this illicit largesse that I now stood in the foreground of. If I tell you there was a smile on her face, and if I say it was complicitous and condoning, that does not mean that if you had been standing there you would have seen the same thing. The way dogs hear sounds undetectable to humans . . .

—Come on, now. I'm willing to go just so far.

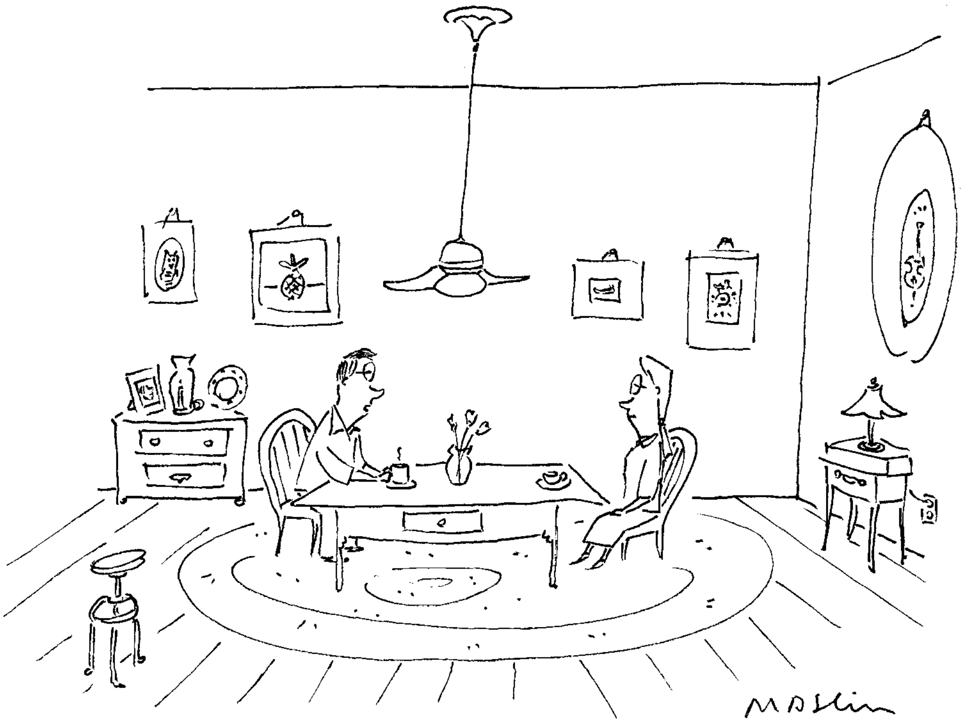
—Look, I'm sure she came out there to take me off somewhere I didn't want to go. And I'm sure I threw something of a fit. What I'm saying is I don't remember the fit and her threats. I remember her long and level smile . . . for anyone who had eyes to see it.

—She's *your* mother.

—One of those summers when real housebuilding was going on, the ten of us made common cause and decided to build a log cabin. For that, we had to cut down trees in the woods behind the



"I was born an urban bird and I'll die an urban bird."



"Listen, Marge, if you're willing to give canasta another chance, so am I."

house. They were huge, thick-barked poplars, and all we had were our Cub Scout hatchets. She didn't allow it. With the same gaze that seemed to reconstitute everything it passed through, she disapproved. I saw her standing on the top terrace behind our house talking to the man who five minutes later would identify himself to us as the owner of the land. She had called him. By then, we had felled five or six of those enormous trees. I think the loud, splintering crack they made as we leaned against them and pushed them over went to our heads. As cracks go, they were about ten times our size, ten times what we'd thought our powers might be. The owner came down and said to stop. He didn't go crazy. Mother had gotten to him first. She'd looked through him and seen us and the falling forest, and said no. It was Mother and not the owner of the land who had come down there. Don't you see?

—Your mother as this sublime, pacifying presence? As open-minded as the Midwest is broad?

—Something like that.

—Let it stand—for the sake of the story. If you'll tell me about the girls.

—The first dirty joke I ever told was to a girl, the girl next door, Jill McIntyre, and one of the Terwilligers. It had three dirty words in it. It involved a little boy named Johnny who had been misinformed about what meant what and told the minister coming to dinner that the shit was on the stove and that his parents were upstairs fucking. The minister himself he called a son of a bitch. I delighted in Johnny's ignorance and hit on the forbidden words in a superior, heckling voice. We were in our adjoining back yards. Jill McIntyre's father overheard the joke. He didn't come raging up to me as he should have, for the man could rage. He, too, went to Mother. It was then that "fucking," "shit," and "son of a bitch" took their place in that paradise for a boy.

—She explained them to you . . . those words?

—Not really. She used the blackboard where she wrote shopping messages to herself. Down the left side of the board, where I'd seen "one doz. tomatoes," "four quarts milk," "one tube toothpaste," she wrote "shit," "fuck," and "son of a bitch." I didn't understand it then, but in writing those words up on the blackboard she had made them as commonplace and itemizable as everything else she had listed there. No block letters, she actually wrote them out. And, since her handwriting was stylishly overwrought and entirely her own, she made the words hers, too, before she gave them back. They would no longer do for dirty jokes. They would do as words that meant what they said.

—And she smiled? While she was doing this?

—Her eyes were wide-set, a hazy blue. Beyond her lay the land. It wasn't really a smile.

IT was as if Mother never got off our street. If I wanted proof of the outside world I had to wait until Dad came back. He had a tan leather suitcase he'd carried so long that every hard edge had been battered smooth. The outside world entered our house when he opened that suitcase, and the smell of shaving cream and Vicks salve came billowing out. Somewhere among the balled socks he'd hide his gifts for me—tops, or marbles, or little plastic pinball games, or if the week hadn't been bad a penknife or a key chain. On special occasions or especially good weeks he'd let me fish in his suitcase until I realized that what I was looking for wasn't there. Then he'd say, "Look in the back seat." That's how I learned I had a new sled, or skates, or BB gun. That's even how I found a new bike—sitting up in the back like a passenger he'd picked up along the way and told to stay put. The next day, Saturday, he'd be there to help me try it out. Mother would go off duty. Or it was as if she'd become somebody else, somebody on a much lesser scale, who fussed around for my father and busied herself preparing for guests who might be coming that night, or with clothes and dry cleaners and babysitters if that was a night they were going out.

My father put these gifts into my hands. Then he sent me away on them. I wonder if you know what a fascinating and timelessly involved event a new bike or sled can be.

—Why wouldn't I know? I knew Mel, too.

—You knew Mel the same way you knew Mother. You knew Mel the softie. Dad learned his salesman's rap, his feints, thrusts, and parries well enough to go out and keep them up for a week, but his clients were buying not because he had outtalked and outsmarted them but because he was such a sweet guy. You knew *that* Mel, a man who eventually understood that his sweetness was his bread and butter. Of course, once he'd realized that and begun to cultivate that sweetness it could go false on him. He certainly liked to make a fuss over you.

—I prefer my version of your father.

—A very sweet guy, I agree. But there was more to him than that.

—I don't doubt it, and I want to hear it all. But please do me one small favor—don't make me play too dumb. Mel's day was Saturday.

—Yes. Years before I got my new bike, he'd taught me how to ride, but each Saturday it was as if he were sending me off again for that first time. I'd look back, expecting to see him where he'd promised to be—holding me upright, one hand on the fender, the other on the back of the seat—and he'd be half a block back down the street, watching me ride away on my own.

—With a certain look on his face? Like your mother?

—Yes, with a look on his face that even at that distance of half a block, and twisted around for only a fraction of a second, I could see in close detail. I can see it now. Gay, proud, exulting in me, a father's boyish, beaming grin, and at the same time there was something guarded in it, and hard—around the eyes and jaw—that hinted at the treachery he'd committed and the guilt he felt. And something else, something undeterred by that guilt and unpersuaded by the father's fond identification with the boy, that gave to the whole expression, as winning as it was, an impending sinister quality that, when I turned back to steer the bike, combined with the breathlessness of that novel experience to make me wonder how it would all end. Those Saturdays when he sent me away on new skates, or a sled, or the bike, or a soapbox racer he'd bought the secondhand wheels for and helped me build, I'd see that expression again. It was nothing a customer of his ever saw, and nothing Mother would have believed, but it was how he looked at me when he'd taken the time and trouble to provide the means for it and wanted to give me speed.

—For the record: I remember Mel's slow pace and his friendly drawl.

COMING TO TERMS

Being French, being nineteenth-century, we know about boredom.
It is a glove, and having invented sex,
We know that the sex of the glove does not matter:

A glove, a simple glove, over the angry knuckles taut,
Over the long fingers twitching, over the three
Mad stars of the palm sweating, over the Devil's Workshop;

And where the glove opens like a wound, a bell, a mouth,
The pulse tongues out the one word *All*,
Which is to say *Absolute*, which is to say

Everything in our grasp, and we grasp the shoulder
Of a chair like the chair we knelt on, bare-kneed children
Saying our *Aves*, and the chair heard us out,

O Mother of π and radii and the irregular verb,
Of the Spitwad Wars and the elephants of Hannibal,
Of Doctor and Nurse, two times, in the cloakroom—

O Mother, hear us now in the hour of our knees!
All that was childwood, and the typographical error
Is not, repeat not, to be corrected; it is all

That remains of our innocence. We are grown-up now,
Which is to say *metaphysical*, which is to say *bored*.
On these long nineteenth-century evenings, we walk the
Boulevard,

Asking ourselves, What of the explosion in the desert,
The one no one witnessed? Was there sound there?
Or only the silence of Him in His long sleep?

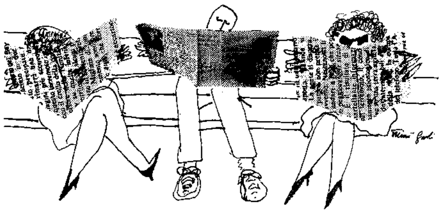
And the chair? Does it become invisible even to itself?
Or does it dance the grave, stiff-legged Dance of the Chairs,
Our absence all around it like a strange music?

Or does it stand, faithful, in the desert of the mind,
And shall we welcome it, happily, reverently,
As wise men an oasis, as children a mirage?

—Henri Coulette
(1927-1988)

• •

—Once he came with me. I had a new Flexible Flyer sled. It was Dad who first noticed that the cornfield had filled up with snow and then crusted over, and who insisted that we break the sled in there. Just in case, he brought my old sled along, a short, stubby thing I would have gladly seen burned. Did he think the Flexible Flyer was too slick and fast? I couldn't imagine that he brought the old sled, which was too small even for me, because he planned to ride down the hill on it himself. I started off on the Flexible Flyer—smelling its newness, its shellac, its unrusted iron, listening to the thin staticky hiss of its runners against the ice, feeling down the length of my body those new, unsplintered boards. That cornfield was almost level. There was no hill to speak of. But my father understood that, with the stubble snowed over and the surface sheet ice, given any slope at all I might go on forever. Actually, I was going to go flying out onto the frozen creek. But before I was halfway there I heard the hiss of my father's runners pulling up behind me. I couldn't understand it. He hung off that old sled of mine the way a foot-long hot dog hung out of a normal-sized bun, yet he was overtak-



ATTORNEY SIX-PACK

ing me, already moving past, and proving my new Flexible Flyer a dud. And there was that look. With his older sled, but with his added weight, he would beat me down to the bottom of that hill and fly out onto that creek, follow its bends until it debouched and debouched again, and finally get to where it was going, well before I came along. He'd be there as I began to follow his course.

After offering that first, breathless glimpse of unprecedented possibilities, it ended as a joke. He beat me down to the creek, but, tumbling off the near bank, he seemed to lose control of his arms and legs and finally lost his perch on the sled. Instead of heading out onto the creek and regaining his speed, he simply plowed into the opposite bank, where I was on him in a flash, entirely without intention running my Flexible Flyer right up the runners of my old sled, which was partly buried in the snow. He was slow getting up and slow to laugh. But he did laugh, and even gave me an affectionate, cuffing hug half sprawled on the ice. He walked back up the hill with me, breaking the crust with his large boots so I could come along and get my footing. Up top, we found two or three of my friends, who had come with their sleds to see what it was all about. My father saw me off one more time, and then walked home, leaving my old sled behind in case my Flexible Flyer really was a dud.

Saturday nights were for Mother. Church aside, Sunday mornings were uncommitted and, it seems to me now, half-incredulous times, times to pause and see if it was all going to continue a week longer or if we had come to the end. The Aztecs, you know, had a cyclical view of history. After a set number of years, they doused every light in the land and sent their chieftains up on a volcano to see if the sun would rise on a new cycle. Sunday mornings, we stayed out of each other's way, kept our fears and uncertainties to ourselves, and waited to see. By noon, the world seemed solid enough to walk out on.

—The Aztecs were also executioners.

—They were anxious. They didn't know what to do to bend history to their will. Mother and Dad didn't exclude me those Sundays. It's just that when they woke up and saw that it was good and that it would last, they turned at once to each other. They had extra cups of coffee, traded sections of the paper, if the weather was nice took it all out to the back porch. At certain times of the year, they stepped down from the porch to examine the flowers and mint they were trying to grow around the house; to pull a weed.

—Is that what you remember about their being together?

—They were very discreet about making love. I know children hear sounds in the night, the strangest laughs and the strangest smackings of flesh. Boys find their father's prophylactics and blow one up. But this is not about that. If I devised a plan for myself those Sundays, and presented it in a casual sort of way, I usually got to carry it out. More and more, the plan I devised was to take long hikes out in the fields, along the country roads and creeks. At first, I would take a sandwich or two and some cookies. Then I took to packing matches and a small square grill that would fit in my Army-surplus backpack. While out in the country I was to make a fire and cook hot dogs or the hamburgers that Mother had patted out for me and wrapped in tinfoil. With hot food under my belt, I might be gone for hours longer than if it was just a sandwich I'd taken, or a Boston Creme. My friends, I assumed, had all made Sunday plans of their own. I don't know; I never went with them. The fields and creek banks we played on during the week I went over now by myself. Or I walked high along the train tracks to trestles and road crossings farther up. I stayed out of the woods, never telling myself why. But it was space I wanted, and I would cross fences and ditches and patches of swamp just to make these long, looping excursions that could take the whole afternoon. I had a sure homing instinct, and if I allowed an angry dog, or a farm, or an electric fence to push me off course one correction was usually enough to get me back on. I now think the only thing odd about those hikes was that, unlike most other kids that age, I never had anything in mind to see or anyplace to go. I wanted to get back where I'd started from, but the idea seemed to be to find out how far I

Joseph Farris

"I'm getting too old for a broom."

• •

could cast the loop before it was time.

—I've noticed that about you. You like to cast loops, to take excursions off into space, with nowhere to go and nothing in particular to see.

—I *have* somewhere to go. And I saw *all* the particulars. I put everything under the lens of that hemispheric sky, and, since no one else was there to dispute my claim, I saw it all. What's more, I saw it on a full stomach. Sitting out under a tree beside a fencerow, my fire safely contained within a circle of fieldstones . . .

—Don't get angry. I didn't say I minded. Do you remember what kind of tree? A fencerow keeping what from what?

—A low, gnarled tree with small, round leaves like a tree in a Rembrandt etching, berries like raspberries, but tougher, tarter. Call it a mulberry tree. Keeping soybeans from oats, wheat, or corn.

—A ten-, eleven-, or twelve-year-old boy, really just a speck, out beside a fire, a mulberry tree, under a hemispheric sky. Weren't you scared?

—That homing instinct, it was like a tether. You begin to take a tether to the end, and you feel the tug back and know the direction it wants to take you in. I was never lost. I wandered within bounds. If you're asking whether I felt a threat from any vagrant who had wandered beyond *his* bounds, I didn't. Probably I didn't know enough to. I usually looped out just to the point where I could feel that tug back home, and there I made my fire, cooked and ate my lunch. I leaned back against the thick bark of that low-browed tree. I stared at the fields—and they didn't have to be rows of corn or soybeans or anything, they could be wasteland slowly smothering under sumac—or I studied whatever happened to be crawling across my leg. A ladybug, for instance. Can you see it? You're at the tension point between competing forces, both essentially protective. There's that tug home and there's that deeply domed space. If you've eaten well, and if you've yet to be badly frightened, then it's all brought to bear on what's crawling across your leg. All that space, then, along with a certainty of shelter, were contained in that ladybug's shell, her dome.

—I see.

—But it wasn't always like that. I didn't always find that right tension point, and when I didn't I could wander dully, following a fence when I should have wriggled through its barbed-wire strands. Then those towering cumulus clouds could oppress me because they crowded my space, and if things hadn't gone right I could take the crows' cawing and clattering in the corn as a personal attack. But mostly things went well enough. My father had a Sunday-afternoon golf game; perhaps because I was out wandering, my mother stayed close to home, sunbathing in the back yard or visiting the neighbors. More than once I got back just as my father was pulling up in his car, or taking his clubs out of the trunk. We greeted each other like men of the world, I inquiring about his score and he about my adventures out on those less frequented fairways. Sunday suppers we ate with sleepy smiles. On Monday mornings, while I was still dressing for school, he'd come in and sit on my bed to remind me that for the rest of the week I was the man of the house. We were no longer boys sprawled on the ice; I got a more serious version of his cuffing hug. Then he was gone.

—Did he ever take you with him?

—It depended on the towns he had lined up, the chances he had to sell—if he could whittle five days down to three, say, and get the job done.

—I know he worked for a quarry then, but not what he sold.

—He sold granite, some red granite, but mostly gray. Granite from Georgia and granite from Vermont. I preferred the Vermont granite, because Dad's boss from there, when he came with his wife to visit, always brought gallon cans of maple syrup, and we'd have big pancake breakfasts. He was a short, bald man with a large wife, and both of them were very friendly. Vermont suddenly became the sweetest, most jovial state on the map—a wrong impression, I think you'd agree. Dad's Georgia boss had a long, worried face and a lot less to say. I remember his oversized hands. As a greeting, he'd place one of them on top of my head and then leave it there long after he'd begun to talk to

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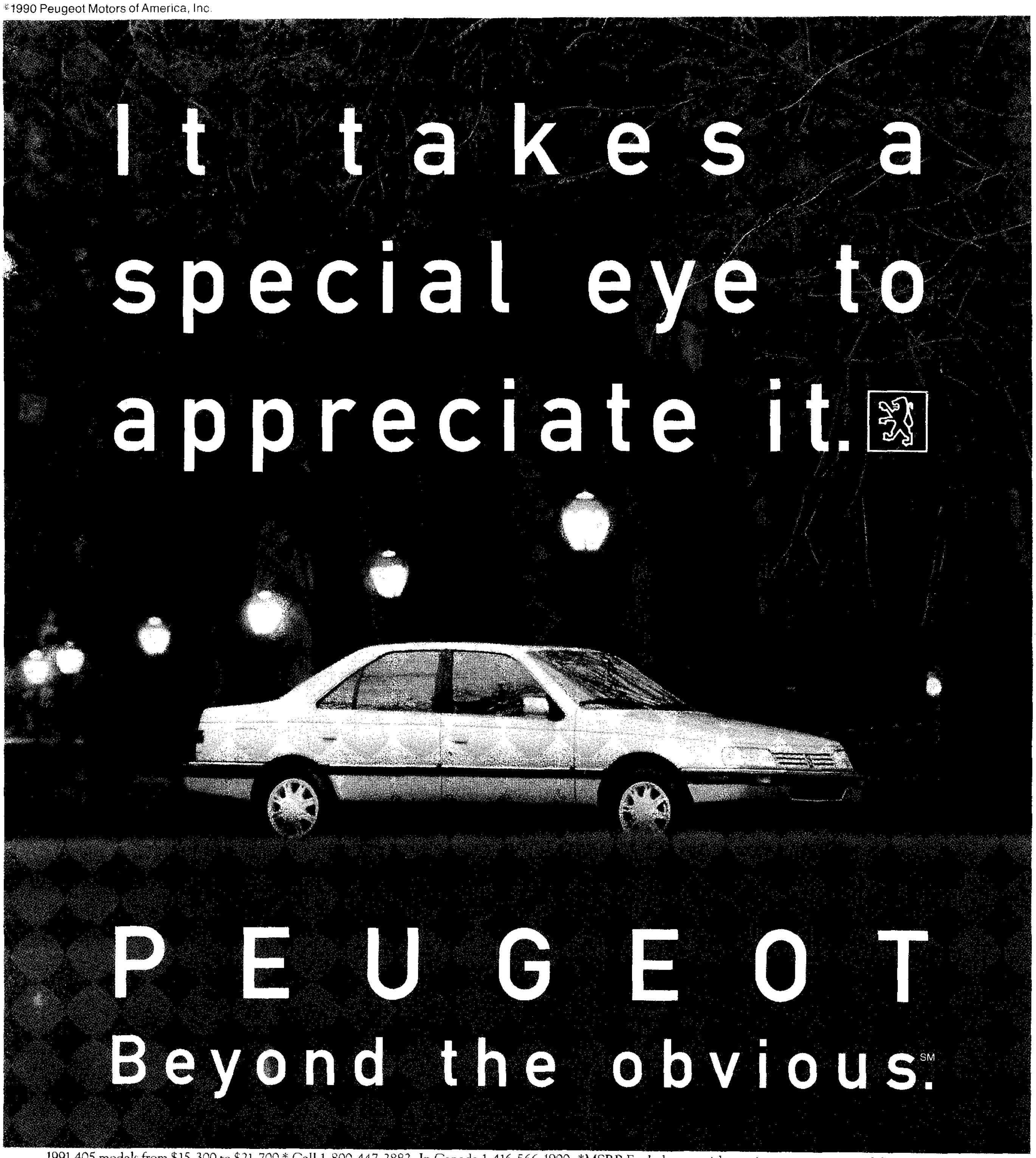

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Dad about something other than his fast-growing son. The fingers would reach from ear to ear. If I tried to pull out from under them they'd tighten just enough to scare me into staying put. But he, like the Vermont boss, always brought new samples of his stock, and I guess that's what I remember best about their visits, those little shiny and speckled red and gray rectangles that I could hold across the palm of my hand. Both men saw that I was fascinated by those samples, and they made a big deal out of showing them to me, taking them out of their cases and setting them before me like a jeweller displaying his wares. I think one of my first impressions of the immensity of things came when I went from those small samples, with their seemingly three-dimensional surfaces and their calibrated weights, to the finished product itself. It'd be like leaving your toy animals behind and standing beside your first elephant at the zoo.

—Granite for what?

—For what? Monuments, markers . . . tombstones, I mean.

—Your father sold tombstones? You never told me that.

—He sold the granite—the blocks, the slabs. I know that things had to be done to it before it was ready for the cemetery. Certainly it had to be engraved. The sides had to be ground and shaped. Whether it arrived from the quarry with the front and back already glazed—

—So . . . Mel sold tombstones and Mel had a "look" each time he sent his son speeding off to that uncertain horizon, tethered, yes, until the day he's not. . . . I'm trying, I really am.

HE told me that if I crawled in back and got some sleep, when I woke up we'd be there, but I didn't want to miss anything. You didn't have to be flying over in a plane. The passenger seat of a Studebaker or a Dodge going sixty miles an hour along a highway would do. The fields were all laid out according to some geometrical master plan. The corn might grow tall and the soybeans bushy, but, as tall and bushy as they got, they never quite outgrew their rows. The woods, too, the woods were either rectangular or L-shaped stands of trees, cut clean to the edge and burr-trimmed on top. There might be a sinkhole out in the fields somewhere with an outcropping of rocks and a single, intractable tree, most likely a cottonwood, but that meant nothing, changed nothing. It invited you to wonder, that's all. If I did lie down in back, I ended up counting the telephone poles as they blinked by or following the interplay of wires as they swooped overhead. Remember, this is Iowa and Illinois.

—I haven't forgotten. Connecticut is somewhere else.

—In the towns, there would be time for Cokes in drugstores on the square or Dairy Queens on the way out, but only after Dad had called on his customer and made his sale. We went straight from the abstract progression of those fields to the display yards of the monument dealers, where the monuments stood in rows, shoulder high and broad, very broad-shouldered, waiting to be sold. The dealer was either in his office, which was nothing like a funeral home but small and cluttered with catalogues, one step up from a quonset hut or trailer, or he was back in his shop, which was an altogether different matter.

Have you ever been around the smell of stone—in this case, granite—being cut, or engraved, or ground to a powder? I can't imagine it would be healthy if you inhaled it for long, but it's an odor both thin and pervasive, which adapts itself to your mood and can even be sweet—sweet in the sense that it hints at a rosy prospect, something pleasant to come. It can also be thick and sweet, oppressive; light-beams from a skylight or high window can blur out in it before they reach the floor. Most times it's not sweet at all. Maybe it's such a variable and untrustworthy odor because it arises from an activity that shouldn't be going on. Man should probably not be cutting stone that old and hard. Man should not be grinding down something as beautiful as that granite into an off-white powder that as it piles up approaches the color of meal. But if that's where the dealer was—back in his shop—when Dad came to call, that's where I'd stand a moment so I could be introduced and have my hand shaken or hair ruffled, and so I could be exclaimed over. But I was no fool. At ten, eleven, or twelve I might have been even more aware, more guileful, than Dad. Parents have always sent their children out to beg. The neediest face is always the face of a child. I put the customer into a more amenable, less tightfisted mood.

—What can I say? That's not Mel. It's not even close.

—No, it's not, I agree. As I said, I don't think Dad knew what was going on. There was that smell of man grinding stone, there was the look of that smell hanging in the air, there were those mostly gray slabs lined up in various stages of incompletion, some with their engraving stencils still attached. I stayed there long enough to do my part toward the creation of a more familiar state of affairs, then went outside to play in the monument-display yard, either by choice or because I had been sent by Dad.

It was all business; I never lost sight of that. Even if I got badly bored and let my mind drift off, I never mistook the rows of monuments in the display yard for a cemetery or any other timelessly removed spot. The mood along the sidewalk and street fronting the yard was business first. Even if you lay on the grass between the rows, and even if that grass was unnaturally lush and soft, the street sounds came and got you. Even if you're lying there in the shade of a tree, taking the coolness off that grass and the glazed surface of that stone while your dad drawls on inside the shop and the owner allows himself to be sold, you're next door to a house with geraniums in the kitchen window, or to a filling station, or to the navy-gray swing sets and jungle gyms of a school playground. You're not far away. The black speckles swimming behind the locked surface of that granite may remind you of the black-spotted guppies in your aquarium back home, but then you see the two words incised into the stone, words waiting for two dates and a name, and you remember what you've never forgotten: that this stone is for sale.

Still, something has changed. Fifteen feet away kids walk down the sidewalk, and it's not the same as your friends walking by your front yard as you lean on your lawnmower. Leaning on the most broad-shouldered of those monuments, you live in the same world as they, but it's as if those fifteen feet between you were untransgressible. It's like Zeno's riddle of Achilles and the tortoise—tricky but you know the answer from the start. Ha! Achilles'll never catch up with that turtle. As fast as he can run, he's still trapped!

—It wouldn't take Zeno or a monument-display yard. Kids that age are naturally shy and suspicious.

—True enough, but I wish I could re-create for you those moments when, waiting for my Dad, I stood in that yard watching other kids walk by. Maybe it's just one kid, carrying, as I would if I were walking down that street on a summer's day, a ball glove, or a fishing rod, or a BB gun. The heat was not bad. In a town that size there's really no reason to worry about exhaust fumes from the street. And, anyway, there's a breeze, enough of one to move the leaf shadows of the trees and to bring the smell of cut grass from up the street. The breeze is important. It passes through that space between you and the other kid as if to say, See, empty, no invisible barriers, no tricks. It touches your temples, your eyelids. As light as it is, you can ride it—it's a summer's breeze; it knows how to navigate heat. There'll be something you do to get airborne, some quick flicking shudder right down the backbone, a trick you were born with and have used before. As naturally shy and suspicious as the other kid may be, he will have ridden those breezes before, too. You'll have a moment, then, the two of you, when you're up off your feet—there's a ball field, or a creek, or a woods full of sparrows nearby where you can play while your dad closes his sale.

—He's you, isn't he, the other kid? You've got nothing to do, so you've conjured him up.

—No, he's real; in towns like these there's always another kid out there you've never seen before. You'd like to find some way to step beyond those rows of monuments and join him. But those fifteen feet might as well be fifteen miles, and the breeze . . . no sooner has it caught you up than it's let you down. You feel the stone's weight and cold. Then there's nothing you can do. You might make some angry, constricted movements that to the average passerby would look like the antics of a fit-prone child, but the stone's weight is beyond measure and hence no longer appreciable as weight. It is something else. Whatever it is causes the other kid to give you a face-saving scowl as he takes off down the street. You want to tell him, Don't be frightened, it's nothing, you've arrived at a time and place, that's all.

—He probably took off because he thought you were too weird for his town.

—I didn't belong there, that's true. I belonged back home.

—A kid who wouldn't step up and say, "Hi, wanna play some catch?"

—I was waiting for Dad, that was really all I could do. He'd find me standing in the owner's display yard, stock-still between rows, and think I was bored. Or faking it just so he'd take me to the nearest Dairy Queen and treat me to my favorite sundae.

—Which was?

—Butterscotch. I loved it. And I learned how to fake it, too. Boredom had its price, and for a man who had just cleared a hundred dollars a butterscotch sundae was a small price to pay.

—Your boredom has always had an edge of panic to it.

—It's called thinking. Or you could say I'm casting my loops.

—Come back. Uncast the loop. You've been left in that display yard.

—I've been left with my butterscotch sundae. Chocolate and strawberry have more evocative tastes, but butterscotch is the sweetest of sweet coatings, with just a little kick at the end, an aftertaste you can't identify but that is strange enough to keep you coming back for more, but not so strange that—

—That you distrust it.

—Yes, a strangeness within bounds.

—That tether . . .

—Yes. It ruins your lunch, of course. Your burger in the basket. But it stays with you until the last town of the day. Those towns were of two kinds: either a Main Street ran from end to end, passing a courthouse in the process, or the highway in and out hit a courthouse square. You'd want to get out of the car in that second kind of town and stretch your legs. But the first kind you'd go cruising through, using up speed you'd accumulated out in the country and not really stopping until you'd reached your motel on the opposite side of town.

After dinner, usually another burger in the basket, there was always light left. Dad wanted to use it to drive by the shop of the customer he had to call on first thing the next morning. I don't know whether he was superstitious or whether he took away some sort of anticipatory pleasure that he carried into his dreams, but we would park for just a moment across the street and gaze at what he had coming. Maybe he was sorting things out in his mind and mapping what he thought was his strategy. He'd tell me, "We got one hundred big ones waiting for us there tomorrow morning, Bud," although my nickname wasn't Bud. I was just his buddy. He might chuckle, or he might release a cautious—even an anxious—sigh, and then we'd drive back to the motel, a crescent of cottagestyle units with dark-green shutters and gingerbread molding on the eaves. There'd be a pond and a scattering of deep-slanted garden chairs. Depending on the nature of that chuckle or sigh, we'd either sit out by the pond in the dark or we'd go straight to bed. If we sat out he'd smoke a last cigarette, and the point of his Lucky Strike would brighten and dim, brighten and dim, as he brought it to his mouth, but, unlike the lightning bugs that were flashing all around us, it wouldn't go out. Not until he flipped it out toward the water in a shower of sparks. I never saw it actually enter the water; it was too dark. I heard the hiss, though, quicker than the hiss of air from a tire or fizz from a bottle, with something bitter in the way it got nipped off. Then the frogs began their two-note eruptions again, like a string of musical burps. And then, as my father's cigarette smoke cleared from the air, the smell of corn reached me from across the pond, freshened, fortified by its contact with the water. It came accompanied by a throaty murmur, a sound that usually forms a subsurface of hearing, or that you only hear if you've been put on alert.

—And you *had* been. You were about to go into that motel room and lie down beside your father.

—"Alert" may be too positive a word, too clear. I stood there smelling and hearing corn, and thanks to the conductive properties of that water and that prairie-flat night I might have been standing on the top of those two terraces I had to mow: it was the corn behind our house that I heard and smelled. Then we went into our motel

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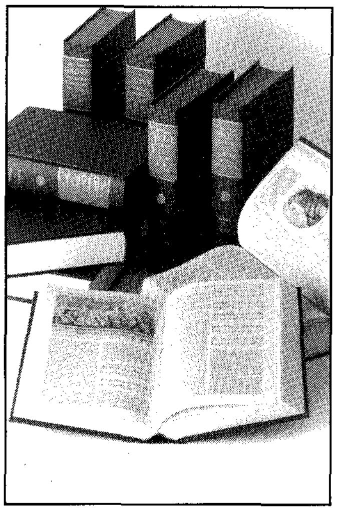

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room and the smell of disinfectant, of course, wiped everything else out. Dad appeared in his pajamas with his teeth already brushed. I got his " 'nuther day, 'nuther dollar" good night. It had been agreed that during the summer I would be allowed to sleep in my shorts, so if I conveniently forgot about my teeth I had only to slip into bed. I lay there wondering if the second I closed my eyes the customer we had to see the next morning would appear to me—his shack-sized office, his barn of a shop, his display yard set flush to the sidewalk with its rows of monuments glimmering like marble in the dark, even though the granite would always be swimming with spots.

But that's not what I saw. Dad's breath had caught, dropped a register, already he'd begun to snore, and what I lay there looking at in that enormous space behind my closed eyes were those fields and woods and creek and train tracks and trestle behind our house. I lay there watching my mother sleep in her bed—just as if I had sleepwalked through the house on one of those weekday nights we shared, only to wake up at her bed and hear her say, with that special mixture of amusement and apprehension in her voice, "What is it? Are you all right? You're still asleep, you know that? Go back to bed." But my bed had not been slept in —I saw it, too. It was made and tucked tight up under the pillow, the way only Mother could do it, wrinkle-free, a perfect blank. Boundless, like everything else. Then, of course, I understood . . .

—Understood what? Go on.

—It was enormous—it was all so enormous—because in every detail it was the world I had known, but for once I had seen it without seeing myself in it, without even seeing it from my point of view. And my absence and the way my mother and my friends went unheedingly about their lives did something remarkable to my sense of proportion. I don't think it made things larger so much as gave to it all an unnatural depth of field. I saw the closeup and the faraway in equally fine detail . . . in *achingly* fine detail . . . the dirt clinging to the bullrush roots . . . the new sky shining through after we'd chopped one of those towering poplars down to earth. It's because I was gone. I had left it. For once in my life I lay right at the center of things, as if that motel room had been built over the tiered tombs of kings. The gravity there was especially rich. Beside me lay my father, my buddy on these trips, the high priest of the hundred-dollar sale.

—The high priest? Oh, I'd forgotten that. The experiment.

—Dad took me out there, fed me my burgers and sundaes and let me breathe the dust of that ground-up stone. He did his part just as mother had done hers, but he'd also made his sale, and lay there now snoring and dreaming of sales down the line. It would go on and on. More dealers needing granite to grind into monuments to place over the dead, more kids with ball gloves, fishing rods, or BB guns on the outside looking in. I don't remember my dreams, but I know that I finally went to sleep, because I woke the next morning to the sun streaming in through the window. I didn't hear the corn. Well before lunch I craved another butterscotch sundae. That night I got my bed at home back. My mother was there, my friends. It was some time after that, one morning when I wasn't expecting it, when I'd forgotten all that I'm telling you now, that the sun failed to appear, and in the dark my mother and father and I picked up our stuff and we moved. I never saw those nine friends again, not one of them, not once. I got to know Helen and Mel, Helen the busybody, Mel the sweet guy. I took a big step closer to you.

—Me? I was barely born.

—Yes, I know. That's the strange part. Before you could even walk it was as if I had already travelled halfway around the world.

—Second child of Joanna and George. Preceded long before by my sister Dorothy. Who later would show me the sixties in the city, an enormous place for a girl my age, with so much going on. The hours it took to cross Washington Square . . .

—It wouldn't be the same. How could it be? But if you'd like to t[illegible] me . . .

—I will, when the time comes.

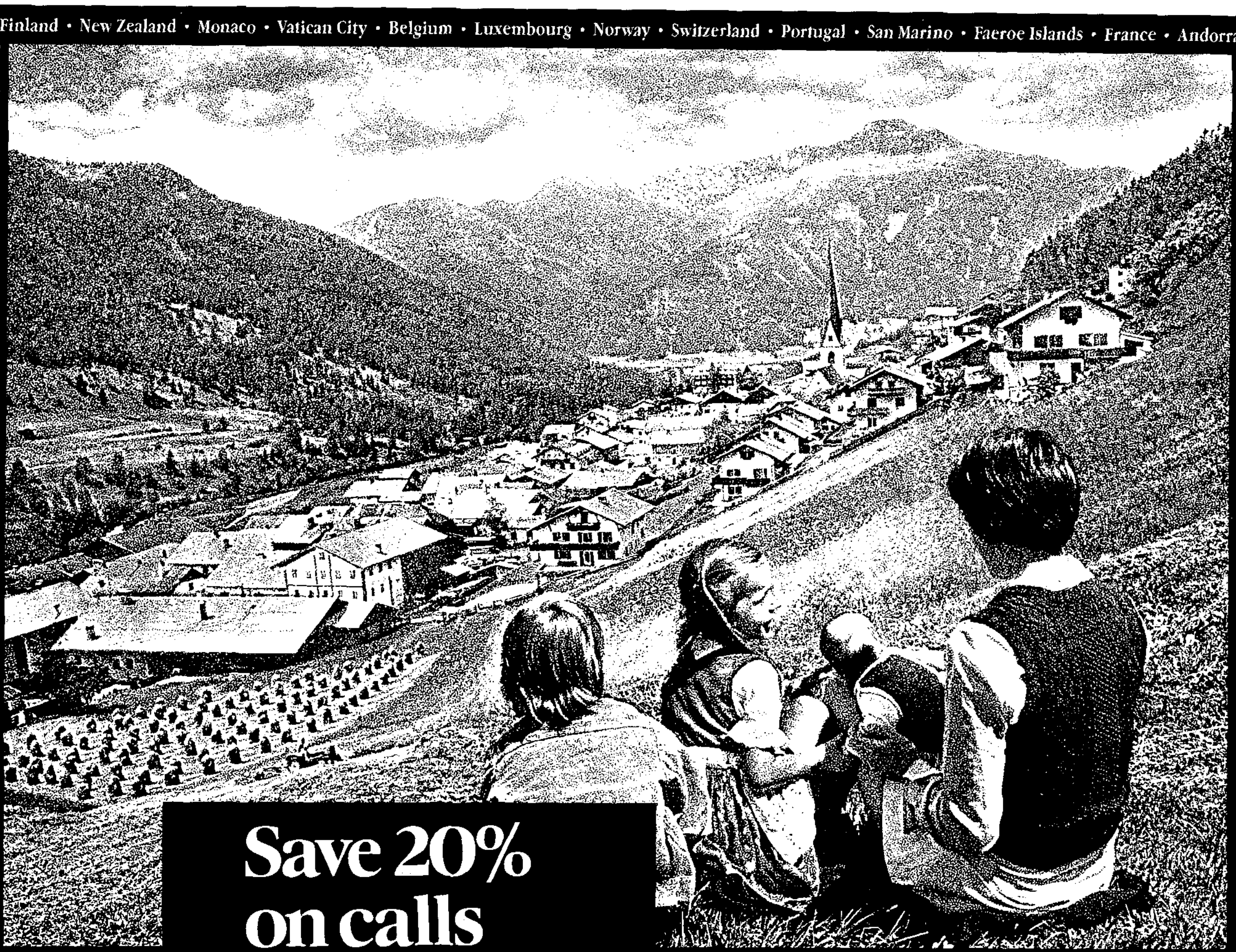
—LAMAR HERRIN

•

WHY COMMUNISM FAILED: Next Thursday, 43 Marilyn Monroe look-alikes will be handing out free artichokes in San Francisco's Embarcadero Plaza. Each Marilyn represents one year since the original Monroe accepted a modeling assignment for the California Artichoke Advisory Board in 1947.—*USA Today*.

It figures.

The Best Of Britain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This special advertising section on the Best of Britain was created by the Marketing and Promotion Division of The New Yorker and did not involve the editorial staff of the magazine.

When you shut your eyes and dream of Britain, you naturally think of traditions: the solid grandeur of the great country houses, the epic novelists, the museums containing the vestiges of the Empire. Inevitably, you imagine a quaint world of chintz sofas, cobbled high streets, toast racks, wet Labradors, and cream teas after long country walks. Yet these traditions imply a way of life that is static and unchanging, and this is only half the story. As much now as at any other time in their history the British are pioneers in technology, arts, business, consumer items, and design.

This is the country, don't forget, that brought the world steam engines and Concorde, Shakespeare and Monty Python, tweed suits and miniskirts. Just as an old oak is always sprouting new shoots, so British tradition is always giving rise to fresh, new, and vital areas of excellence.

A Scotsman in full regalia

Only in Britain: Great Experiences Behind the Sights

Despite its relatively small size, Britain is a big place. There are the obvious charms — the boundless heritage, the country house hotels, the rapid changes in the landscape. And there are magic moments, like tucking into a Cornish pasty and a glass of farm-made cider after a cliff-top walk, or viewing the black mountains and bright water of a Lake District dusk. Then there are those uniquely British "experiences" so precious to both locals and visitors alike.

Ask any out-of-towner why he or she makes trips to London and the answer will invariably be, "for the theatre." Everybody goes, which is one reason it's so inexpensive. Long before the days when Shakespeare squeezed the world onto the Globe stage, the theatre had been an intrinsic part of British life. The Globe stands no more, but instead dozens of West End theatres straggle along the Strand, Shaftesbury Avenue, and Drury Lane — all

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THE PRIME MINISTER

It gives me great pleasure to contribute this foreword to The New Yorker magazine's special feature, "The Best of Britain."

The New Yorker is well known for its reporting, commentary, and cartoons, and is a magazine with a great deal of style. I am delighted that the United Kingdom was chosen as the subject of this special advertising feature.

The links between the United States and Britain are very close, yet few realize just how extensive these links are. Britain is the favorite destination for Americans travelling abroad. Last year 2.8 million of them enjoyed the history, traditions, culture, and landscape we have to offer.

We are also the largest recipient of American direct investment, with no less than forty per cent going into the United Kingdom. In the opposite direction, Britain is the largest foreign investor in the United States of America — still far ahead of the Japanese.

The last two years have been highly successful for trade in goods and services in both directions, and the U.S.A. still remains our largest single export market — as it has been for many years. That market is an open but highly demanding one. And Britain's success in selling to the American consumer demonstrates the competitiveness of our exporters and the attractiveness of the innovative and high-quality products and services we can offer.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate The New Yorker for its special feature, "The Best of Britain," and wish it continuing success.

Margaret Thatcher

August 1990

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The Camden Passage antique market overflows with bric-a-brac

glittering like the inside of a jewel box and offering a range of what are quite simply the best dramas, musicals, and operas in the world.

The London markets are another not-to-be-missed British specialty. Sure, they often require an early start, but a visit to Portobello Road, Bermondsey, Camden Passage, or Camden Lock offers a double return on your time. There's always the chance of picking out that perfect gift for a relative or, if you really like it, a souvenir for yourself. Then there are the people. Whatever it is about a market in any country that brings out eccentric national characteristics, it seems that Britain has a double dose.

Even if London is a visitor's first landfall, is that any reason to spend an entire vacation there? All too often, otherwise sensible people climb off the plane, get beguiled by the absurd amounts of heritage, pomp, and entertainment, and never venture out of the capital to experience the "hospitality infrastructure." More than anything else this is what makes exploring Britain's nooks and crannies such a real joy. Everywhere you go (often the more isolated you are the better the experience) there's a bed and breakfast. If by chance all the rooms are taken, the proprietor will call the village network to find you a soft bed and a warm welcome. The cost? Amazingly, it's less than twenty dollars a night including breakfast, the best meal of the day.

You'll drive off after breakfast armed with a list of recommendations gleaned over the morning pot of tea. Then, just when you thought it would never come, it's time for

THE BEST BRITISH GARDENS

It amounts to an obsession, this British preoccupation with gardens. From the formal Elizabethan layouts to the sweeping vistas of *Capability Brown's landscaped parks, the country's public gardens have blossomed into a source of justifiable pride. Some are botanical* collections overflowing with varieties from every corner of the globe, some are shady arboretums, while others are simple, quiet corners of beauty surrounding the great country houses.

- Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Surrey
- Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Hampshire
- Royal Botanical Garden, Edinburgh, Lothian
- Beaulieu Palace, Hampshire
- Sissinghurst Castle Gardens, near Cranbrook, Kent
- Stourhead, Mere, Wiltshire
- Sudeley Castle, near Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
- Powis Castle, Welshpool, Powys
- Chelsea Physic Garden, Chelsea, London
- Hidcote Manor Garden, near Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire
- Gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley Common, Surrey

The British countryside is abloom at Hidcote Manor Garden (left) and Sissinghurst Castle Garden (below)

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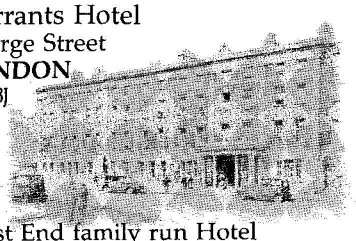

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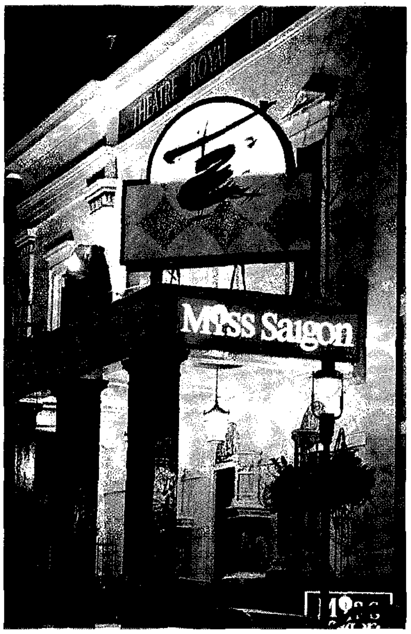
lunch in a pub. This great institution, only distantly related to the American bar, is a gathering place for the whole community, a common ground where the rat race passes by the door, never through it. As a visitor you're a novelty, a conversation catalyst, and, although the tales may be hard to swallow, the beer and ploughman's lunch go down "a treat." Two hours later, it's time for tea — thick, thick jam, hot buttered scones, and a "cuppa" the national restorative. Devon, with its clotted cream, is the preferred locale, but any tea house will do.

In between these hospitality stops, every visitor should cram in at least one "event," one occasion when the British become even more British than they were before. It doesn't matter whether this event is a point-to-point (steeplechase) in a small country town, Lady's Day at Ascot, or an elite cultural event like the Glyndebourne opera festival. Whatever it is, it has its own dress code (in these cases, corduroys, impossible hats, or black tie), its own idiosyncratic mode of behavior. Where better to sit, eat, drink, and watch the locals strut their stuff?

As impressive as Britain's museums, country houses, and castles really are, these major sights only make up half the memories. In a way they're just the backdrop, the setting. It's an experience like a great performance, a cozy bed and breakfast, a game of darts with the locals over a lunchtime pint, or a day at the local races that makes the real memories.



Experience London's performing arts

THE BEST BRITISH SPORTING EVENTS

The British regard sport as much more than an idle diversion for Saturday afternoons. The sport itself is treated with the utmost seriousness, while the major events are regarded with eccentric whimsy. A great event is a carnival, a background for champagne picnics, boutonnieres, and bonhomie. The bigger it is, the less serious it seems to be.

- *Motor Racing World Cup (October 26–28, 1990)*
- London to Brighton Veteran Car Run (November 4, 1990)
- Royal International Horse Show (June 13–17, 1991)
- Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships (June 24–July 7, 1991)
- Henley Royal Regatta (July 3–7, 1991)
- Cowes Week (sailing) (August 3–11, 1991)
- Braemar Royal Highland Gathering (Scottish games) (September 7, 1991)
- Rugby Union World Cup Final (November 2, 1991)

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Hanbury Manor offers its own health club with an indoor pool, a superb English golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus II, horseback riding and fly fishing. Also three fine restaurants under the guidance of Albert Roux. Hanbury Manor is just 22 miles north of London. Come visit Rockresorts'—and your—new country place in England. See your travel agent or call 800-223-7637.

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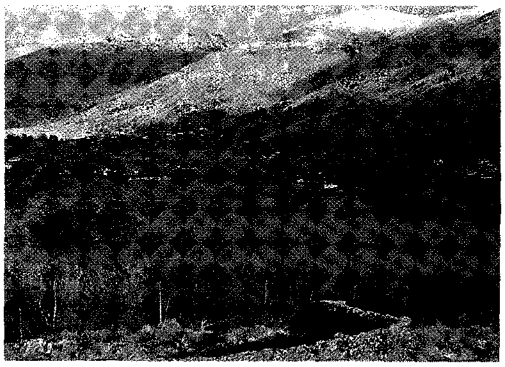
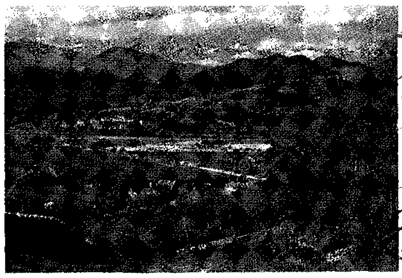
Britain At A Glance



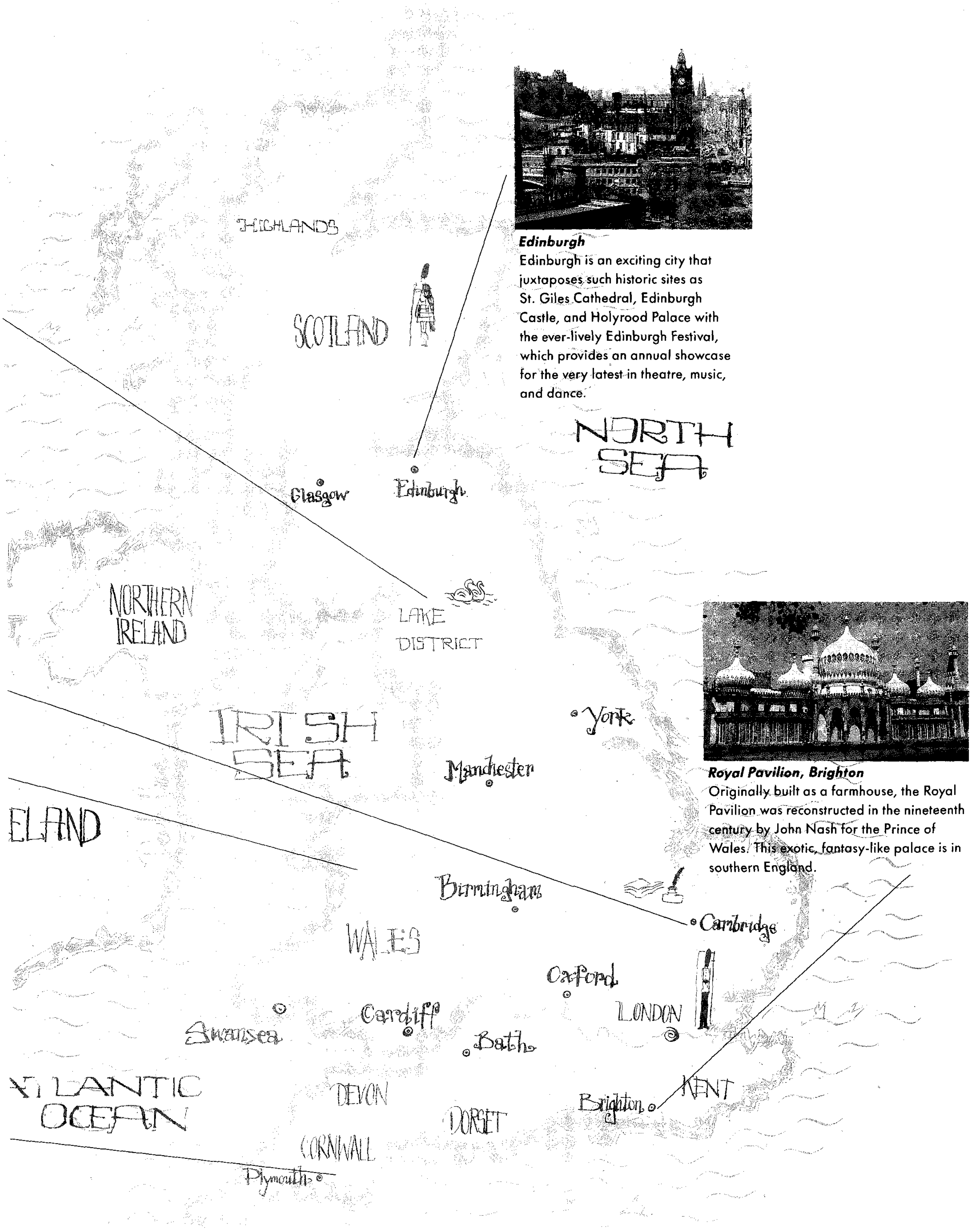
Grasmere
One of the most popular places in the Lake District, Grasmere is well known for its sports festival. The region's beauty was best summed up by William Wordsworth, who described the bewildering valley floor as a wheel, the spokes of which are formed by the lakes and valleys. The area enjoys an unparalleled reputation for natural beauty.

King's College and Chapel
Cambridge, distinguished by its array of the finest in English architecture ranging from the medieval period to the present day, is home to King's College and Chapel, one of the twenty-five colleges in the Cambridge area. The campus grounds are marked by thick lawns, flourishing gardens, and rows of stately trees, and the river Cam meanders its way behind the college.



Snowdonia and the Pass of Aberglaslyn
This mountainous region in northwestern Wales reaches heights of 3,560 feet. Although the area is rather remote, it includes some of the most spectacular scenery to be found anywhere.

Marazion
The waterside village of Marazion in England's southwestern region derived its name from "marghas," the Cornish word for market. Perhaps its most famous attraction is St. Michael's Mount, crowned by a castle originally built by and still belonging to the St. Aubyn family.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Edinburgh
Edinburgh is an exciting city that juxtaposes such historic sites as St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh Castle, and Holyrood Palace with the ever-lively Edinburgh Festival, which provides an annual showcase for the very latest in theatre, music, and dance.

Royal Pavilion, Brighton
Originally built as a farmhouse, the Royal Pavilion was reconstructed in the nineteenth century by John Nash for the Prince of Wales. This exotic, fantasy-like palace is in southern England.

Marazion photo © Adam Woolfitt/Woodfin Camp & Associates; all other photos courtesy of the British Tourist Authority

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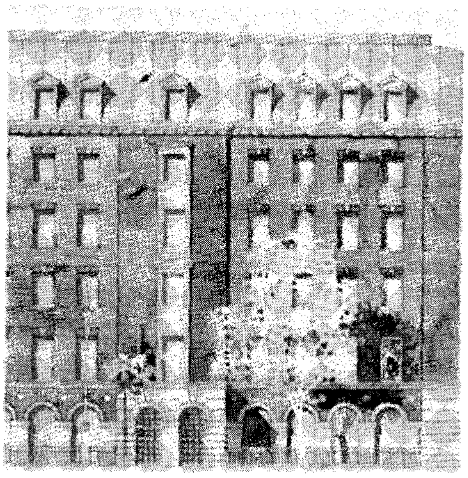

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The Proof of the Pudding: British Cuisine, the True Story

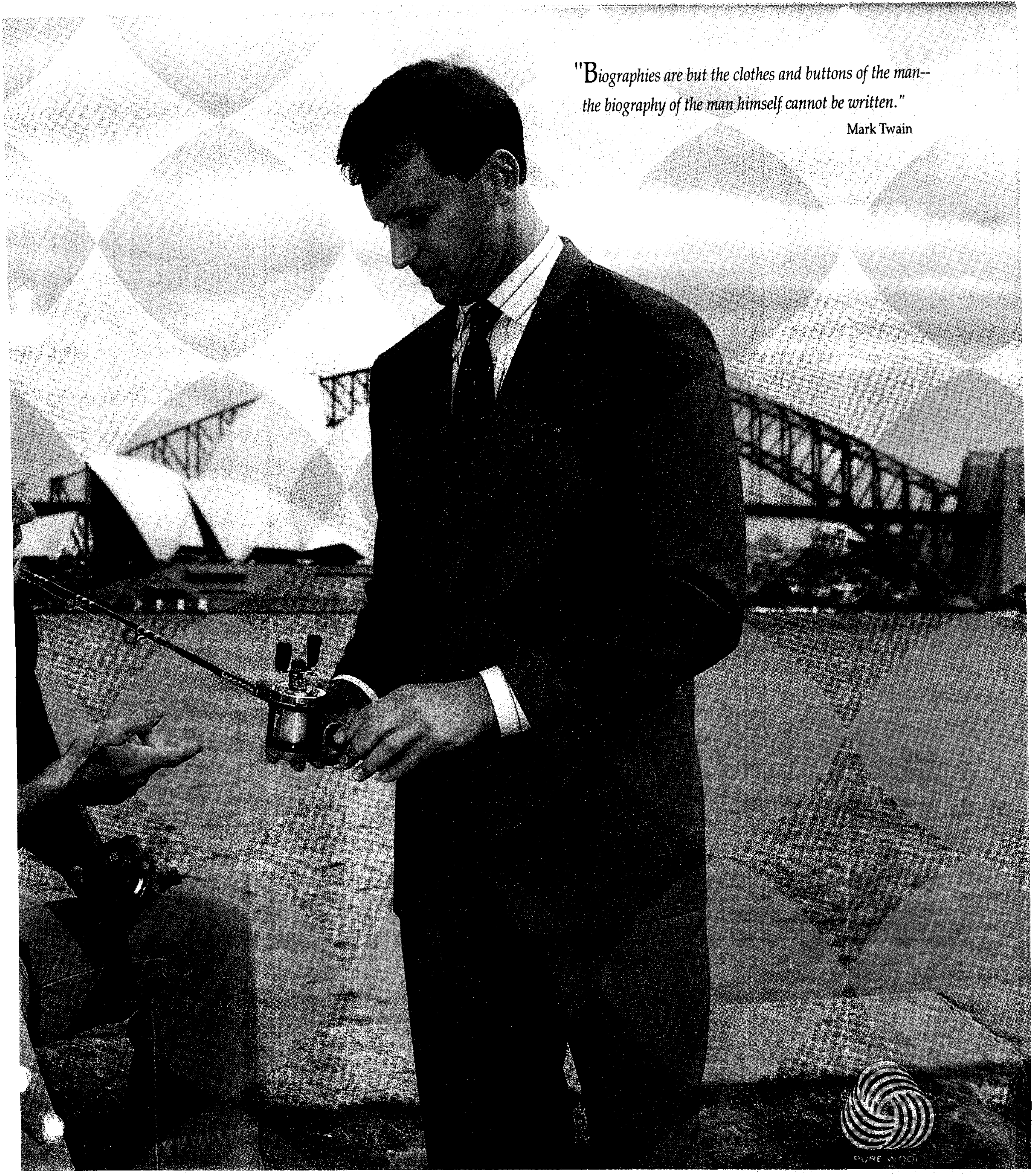
British cuisine is much maligned, to the point that many people see the term as an *oxymoron*. These misinformed masses cite such regional anomalies as haggis, mushy peas, blood pudding, and headcheese as hard evidence. Yet, in all fairness, these delicacies are just as much acquired tastes as American favorites like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, grits, and breakfast pancakes.

Just like anywhere else, Britain has its traditional and its imported fare. The traditional has always been very simple and very good. Historically, the British have never been tempted by intricate food; they don't do frills (an approach that once prompted the remark that they are "a people with sixty different religions and only one sauce — melted butter"). It has always been the raw materials that counted, not the preparation. At their most imaginative they came up with dishes like the sandwich, invented by the fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–1792) only because he was always too busy gambling to eat lunch any other way. Then, as now, Britain's traditional strength lay in natural foods like oysters, salmon, cheeses, jams, breads, vegetables, fruits, and fine meats.

While the traditional fare has always been good, it was the foreign influences that posed the real problem. In the early nineteenth century, when the British stopped fighting the French and started adopting some of their refinements instead, British cooking began to change. Along with the imported recipes came the new fad of "restaurantes," which began to replace the inns and taverns in high society. Georges Auguste Escoffier was one of the more famous chefs who crossed the Channel.

After this culinary infusion came a change for the worse. No doubt confused by the flood of foreign recipes, and embroiled in two world wars and the challenges of a crumbling empire, British cooking went through an identity crisis for the first half of the present century. Fortunately, pubs continued to serve the good traditional fare — meat pies, ploughman's lunch, roast beef — but the restaurants aspired unsuccessfully to write French menus and serve Continental cuisine. Only recently

> *"Biographies are but the clothes and buttons of the man--*
> *the biography of the man himself cannot be written."*
>
> Mark Twain



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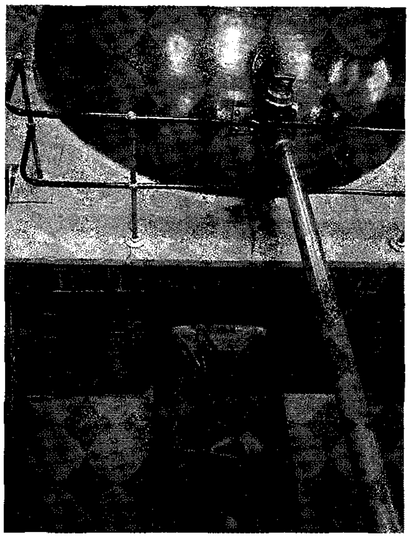

A worker stokes the fire at a Scottish distillery

have these mistakes been corrected.

Today there is a new wave of fare emerging, not just in the cities but around the country, particularly in the small country house hotels and select village restaurants. A group of dedicated young chefs is leading the way, combining the strengths of foreign influences and traditional British raw materials in an unmistakably British cuisine. In addition to the old favorites like Trinity pudding, Bakewell tart, beef Wellington, and cock-a-leekie soup is an array of sophisticated dishes with hardly a French accent among them.

The public is getting better informed as new British cookbooks are hitting the shelves. In one of them, "Great New British Cooking," Jane Garmey describes this mouthwatering meal as an illustration of the trend: chicken liver terrine with Cumberland sauce, roast duck stuffed with black currants, summer pudding (bread soaked overnight in a mixture of raspberries and red currants), and an array of cheeses that includes a Blue Vinny from Dorset and a Cotherstone from Yorkshire. But those who still think that "British cuisine" is a contradiction in terms shouldn't be swayed by Garmey's enthusiasm. Instead they should consider the proverb, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," and try some British cuisine for themselves.

Cheers! A Salute to British Drinks

From still pints to real ale to tiny tipples of after-dinner liqueurs, the British take drinking seriously. It's not that they drink a lot, it's just that their national drinks are deeply rooted in tradition and are a justifiable source of pride.

THE BEST SMALL MUSEUMS

Every country has at least one great museum, one huge, long-halled repository that takes three hours to walk through and at least a week to see. Britain certainly has many more of those than its fair share, most notably the British Museum. Yet often more pleasure can be had from those out-of-the-way specialist museums filled with a small but easily assimilable collection of quality works.

- *Sir John Soane's Museum (Lincoln's Inn Fields, London). A private house built in 1813* that shows off a fine collection of paintings and objets d'art.
- Wallace Collection (Manchester Square, London). A Georgian house filled with antiques and furniture from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- Tate Gallery (Millbank, London). Now even more impressive with its permanent Turner exhibit.
- Museum of the Moving Image (South Bank, London). A world-class cinema and television museum that opened in September, 1988.
- The Imperial War Museum (Lambeth, London). Beautifully exhibited uniforms and war paraphernalia.
- The Queen's Gallery (Buckingham Palace, London). The Queen shares some of her *inestimable historical treasures.*
- Pollock's Toy Museum (Scala Street, London). A topsy-turvy toy museum that makes you feel like Alice in Wonderland.
- Holburne of Menstrie Museum (Great Pulteney Street, Bath). A Regency house containing the fine Holburne family collection.
- Burrell Collection (Pollok Country Park, Glasgow). Placed in a superb setting, one of the finest family art collections to go public in the last decade.
- The Gladstone Pottery Museum (Longton). A tribute to the great age of pottery.
- The Welsh Folk Museum (outside Cardiff). Welsh rural life displayed in a re-created town and an ancient castle.
- The Alexander Keiller Museum (Avebury). Shows off pottery and Neolithic artifacts from nearby excavations.

Among the more accessible collections in London is Sir John Soane's Museum

Courtesy of the British Tourist Authority

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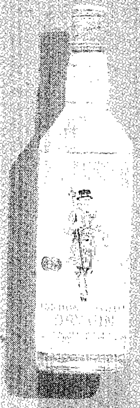


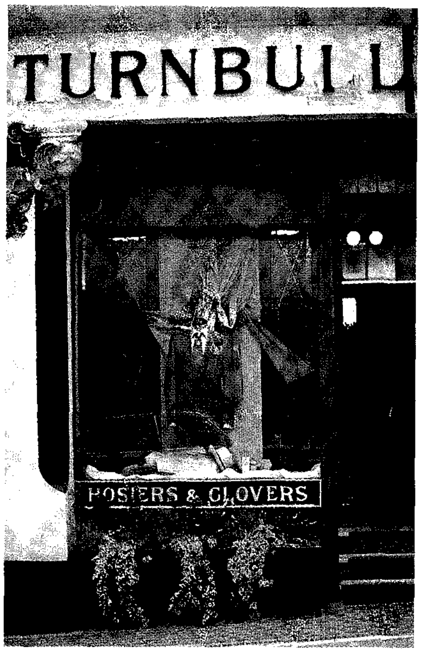
47% Alc./Vol. 100% Grain Neutral Spirits. Imported by Hiram Walker & Sons, Inc., Farmington Hills, MI. © 1990.

Whisky comes immediately to mind. Invented by inspired ancient monks dabbling in alchemy on the moors of Scotland and Ireland, it has often been copied but never equalled. Why? It is truly the product of the places it's distilled, drawing its softness and purity from the peaty mountain water used as its base. The unblended single malts, the products of individual distilleries, are the pinnacle of the art.

Gin is, of course, originally a Dutch product made from juniper berries, but the concept was enthusiastically adopted in the mid-1600s by the brewers of Portsmouth, London, and Bristol (which accounts for the names of the varieties available today). Its sublime manifestation — gin and tonic — was discovered much later, when a British soldier in India mixed his spirit with the quinine water that served as his malaria medicine to make it more palatable.

THE BEST BRITISH MOVIES AND TV PRODUCTIONS
(and where they were filmed)

- "All Creatures Great and Small" (Wensleydale and Swaledale, North Yorkshire)
- "Bergerac" (Jersey, Channel Islands)
- "Brideshead Revisited" (Oxford and Castle Howard, North Yorkshire)
- "Chariots of Fire" (Cambridge, Eton College in Eton, Berkshire and Bebington in Merseyside)
- "The French Lieutenant's Woman" (Lyme Regis in Dorset and Kingswear in Devon)
- "Letter to Brezhnev" (West Kirby near Liverpool in Merseyside)
- "Local Hero" (the village of Pennan in Grampian and the beach at Morar in Inverness-shire)
- "Mona Lisa" (London and Brighton)
- "My Beautiful Laundrette" (Peckham in South London)
- "A Private Function" (Ilkley in Yorkshire)
- "The Rainbow" (Borrowdale and the northern Lake District, Cumbria)
- "Scandal" (Cliveden in Buckinghamshire and London)



Jermyn Street in London offers first-rate shopping venues

But for those with a thirst to quench there's nothing better than a pint properly served in a proper British pub. The beer comes in many guises — bitter, stout, ale, mild, and lager — all but the last served at room temperature so the subtle nuances of taste can be most easily enjoyed. The various types are treated by connoisseurs with the same reverence as wine buffs treat wine.

Lastly, the cider deserves hearty applause. Although available everywhere, the farm-made brews of Britain's southwest are an unmatched taste of country — thick, heady, and delicious.

A Treat in Store: Britain's Prestigious Consumer Goods

Thanks to the globalization of the retail industry, the world's major shopping streets are all beginning to look the same. There is, however, one notable exception to the rule. Britain's famous conservatism has enabled it to stick to the firm ground of traditional style rather than ebb and flow in the tides of international fashion. The result? Shops like Harrods, Fortnum & Mason, Liberty, and Asprey have an unequalled reputation for excellent goods and service, while the leading shopping streets like Bond Street, Jermyn Street, and St. James's are considered *the* source for discerning consumers.

Ever since the impeccable Beau Brummell (who used to polish his shoes with champagne and soil a dozen neckties in his daily quest for the perfect knot) waltzed down London's fashionable streets, Britain has been the home of menswear and accessories. The tailoring center of Savile Row needs little introduction to those favoring suits cut in the traditional English style. To complete the garb, those gentlemen-in-the-know seek out the small, often family-owned, retailers of London's "Golden Mile" south of Mayfair. Behind bow-windowed shopfronts on Jermyn Street hide the cream of Britain's shirtmakers, selling bespoke and off-the-rack. On nearby St. James's Street, James Lock & Co. has been supplying men's hats to a loyal clientele since 1759. Then again, who hasn't heard the reputation of the sturdy British shoe (anything from brogues to riding boots) and the ubiquitous "brolly."

The vagaries of the British climate, though greatly misunderstood (New York, Chicago, and San Francisco all have a higher annual rainfall), have led to excellence in more than umbrellas. Just look at raincoats like the Burberry, waxed-cotton

Shepherd Market in London

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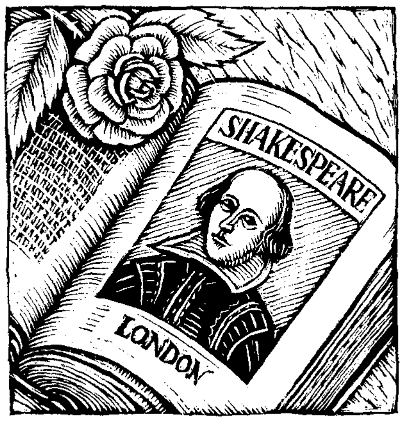
If your sights are set on "Phantom of the Opera," choose the "London Showcase" vacation. In addition to a ticket to "Phantom," you get a ticket voucher for another play, plus a pre-theatre dinner, an evening's entertainment with dinner and backstage theatre tour. All with six nights' hotel accommodations, Continental breakfasts, sightseeing, service charge and taxes from $529 to $828 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare.



The Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon stages works by the "bard," and puts on many of the top plays in Britain. British Airways Holidays include tickets on many vacations.

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In addition to these inclusive vacations, British Airways Box Office service offers you a way to book seats at guaranteed rates — before you leave — to London's most outstanding events. Box Office Showstoppers gets you choice seats for more than three dozen of London's top theatres. Box Office also offers seats for London Philharmonic concerts, opera and ballet at Covent Garden — even the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon.

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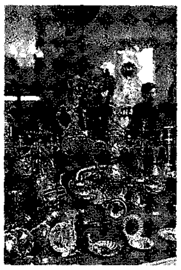

A glittering window

jackets like the Barbour, and, of course, the spectrum of British woollens. Harris tweed, Shetland wool, and the Guernsey and Aran sweater styles all originate from islands off the coast, while cashmere knitted in Scotland is one of Britain's finest buys.

Considering its long history, it's hardly surprising that antiques are another of Britain's strong suits. The two auction houses Sotheby's and Christie's obviously head the list of sources, followed by a host of private galleries like Partridge and Mallett. There is a specialist for every taste — whether it's antique silver or eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English furniture — and for every budget. The London markets, such as Portobello Road, Camden Passage, and Bermondsey Market, are highly recommended for bric-a-brac.

While antiques are obvious, there's another area of national specialty that is frequently overlooked: the country has a strong tradition in toiletries. Apart from the internationally recognized shop names like the Body Shop and Crabtree & Evelyn, there are some excellent small retail chains hidden away in the country's shopping centers. The scent cognoscenti will tell you that Floris on Jermyn Street is the grande dame of the business after plying its delightful concoctions for over two hundred and sixty years.

While other countries can boast the cheapest electronics or the most modern gadgets, Britain rests secure with a different reputation. After centuries of retail tradition, it knows what it does best and continues to do it, unmindful of fashion's fickle changes.

Harvie & Hudson
97
97

Britain's top shirtmakers reside on Jermyn Street

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Courtesy of Floris

FIT FOR A QUEEN: THE ROYAL WARRANT

As early as the twelfth century, certain purveyors of goods and services were granted charters signifying that royalty were numbered among their customers. It was the first form of advertising. This early promotional campaign obviously worked, and by the Elizabethan era a whole range of retailers was boasting the sovereign's patronage. Among the larger suppliers like brewers and carriage makers were a motley array of small operators like mole takers, button makers, sword cutters, operators for the teeth, even corn cutters (feet not cobs) and "goffe"-club makers.

It was Queen Victoria, however, who established the Royal Warrant as we know it today — "a formal document appointing a tradesman as a supplier of goods or services to the Royal Household authorizing him to display the Royal Arms." And it was in the early years of her reign that the Royal Warrant Holders Association, which celebrated its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary this year, was founded. Many of the companies conferred with this honor by Her Royal Highness — Cadbury Brothers, Chivas Brothers, Chubb & Sons, Schweppes, and R. Twinings among others — are still familiar names a century and a half later.

For those who regard the Royal Family as half-fictional, half-divine characters, the current list of eight hundred and sixty Royal Warrant holders may be surprising. It seems that, like many people, Queen Elizabeth has a hairdresser, a chimney sweep, a carpet cleaner, a pest controller, and a launderer. She buys floor wax, vacuum cleaners, and disinfectants, she shops at K. Shoes, eats Weetabix, and has name tapes sewn inside her clothes. But, unlike us mere mortals, she also has need of crown jewellers and manufacturers of lamprey pies, coaches, and gold leaf.

To apply for a Royal Warrant a firm must fulfill certain requirements. It must supply either the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Queen Mother, or the Prince of Wales (each bestows a warrant bearing his or her own name) for a minimum of three years. If the application is successful then the firm has the right to display the warrant until it is reviewed ten years later or until the honor is revoked for misuse. Under no circumstances is the holder of the warrant allowed to use it for rampant commercialization or leak details of the royal preference.

Considering these requirements, the warrant is much more than an indication of royal favor; it is also a reliable sign of "excellence." After all, if the Royal Family can't afford to pick the best, who can?

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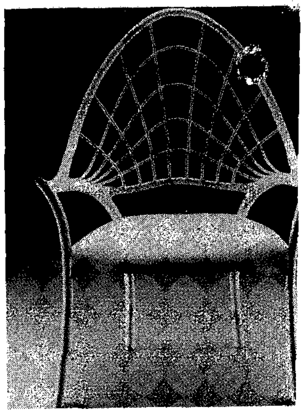
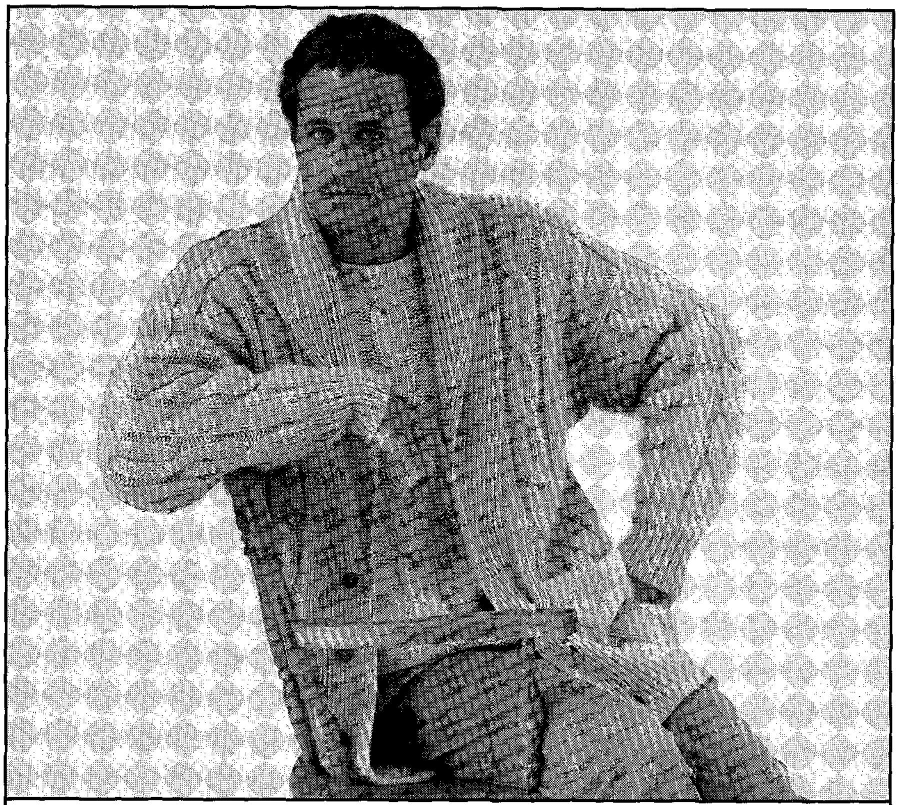
Parallel Lines: A Look at the Two Sides of British Design

The concept of British design presents an intriguing puzzle. On the one hand Britain is regarded as a quaint, slow-moving adherent to a traditional way of life. It has given the world the "English look," popularized in America by the "prince of chintz," interior decorator Mario Buatta; it has given contemporary American furniture makers like Baker and Widdicomb inspiration for their historical reproductions of finialed highboys and four-poster beds; and it has proved a model for classic clothes designers like Ralph Lauren. On the other hand, Britain is constantly distinguishing itself in all areas of contemporary design, boldly sharpening the latest cutting edge with a distinctive zeal.

The key to the puzzle lies in understanding that tradition and eccentricity have equal play in the British psyche, that the country's place in the vanguard of modern design is, in itself, a part of its tradition. The great names behind the eighteenth century's "golden age" of British furniture design — Sheraton, Hepplewhite, and Chippendale — were once considered cutting-edge, as were their successors, Adam and Mackintosh, and even latter-day examples like Russell and Conran. Today, another fresh wave of designers is updating one of the country's oldest industries. Their work was displayed last May in New York when twenty-four of the new names came together at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair. Among them were John Makepeace with his organic works in rare indigenous woods, Tom Dixon and his Wok chair fashioned from discarded kitchen utensils, and Jon Mills displaying his one-of-a-kind



One of John Makepeace's up-to-date designs in laminated holly



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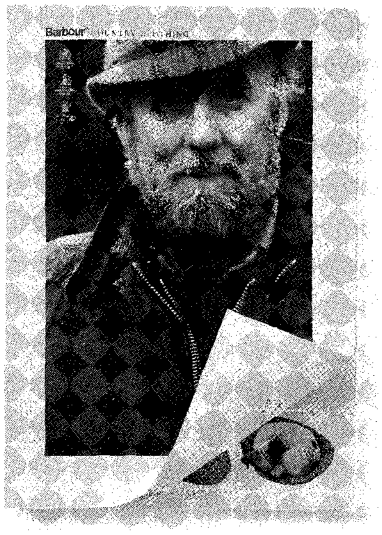

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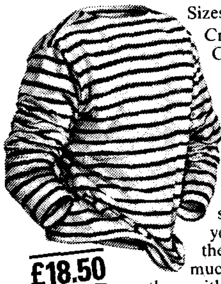

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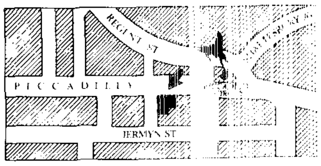

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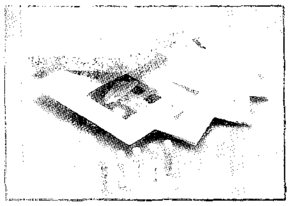

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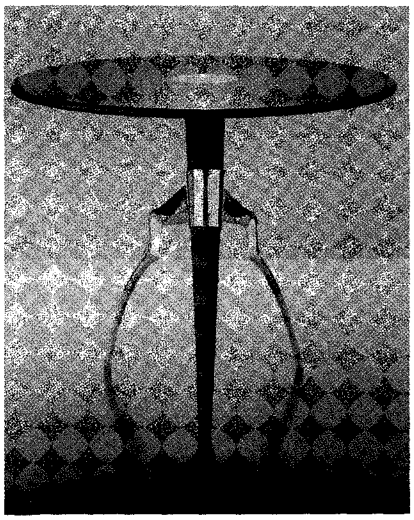
One of Tom Dixon's designs, using found metal objects (left) and the Antelope table created by Matthew Hilton (below)



work called the Playful Bath.

Just as furniture design is showing new growth, so the British fashion industry is being rocked by similar vital signs. Again this is nothing new. After all, it was Britain's Mary Quant and Barbara Hulanicki who electrified the catwalks of the sixties and early seventies, bringing shocking and whimsical fashions within easy reach of the younger generation. At long last the traditional tweed knee-lengths were knocked aside by provocative miniskirts, gaudy flares (bell-bottoms), and see-through blouses. Out of this hubbub has emerged a breed of daring young designers earning instant international recognition for their bold individualistic expressions. Established names like Jean Muir and Zandra Rhodes have been joined by a slew of new recruits like Katharine Hamnett, Vivienne Westwood, Bruce Oldfield, Jasper Conran, and the Emanuels (now separate entities). Despite their international status, the Brits haven't lost their innovative ability or shock value, as shown by the latest fashion — garments made from salmon skin.

Not all of Britain's creative strength, however, lies in its ability to look ahead, to balance delicately on the cutting edge. Often, as in the case with its porcelain industry, its advantage comes from astute use of its heritage. Ever since Josiah Wedgwood began turning out his distinctive powder-blue jasperware in the mid-1700s, Britain has been recognized as the foremost producer of fine quality pottery and porcelain. Since then many of the original firms, like Spode, Royal Doulton, Minton, and Royal Worcester, have gained in international cachet, along with many of their original designs.

In plates and teapots it's obviously not innovation that matters to the modern consumer but the timelessness of unequalled design. The same holds true in other areas of design expertise. Laura Ashley's flowered dresses with lace collars, David Hicks's wood-panelled interior designs, Wilton carpets, and Stuart classic crystal all point more toward Britain's heritage than any international cutting edge.

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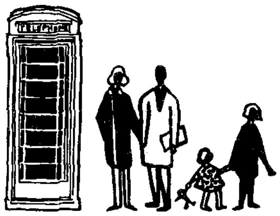

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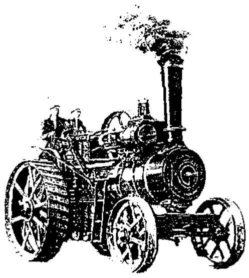

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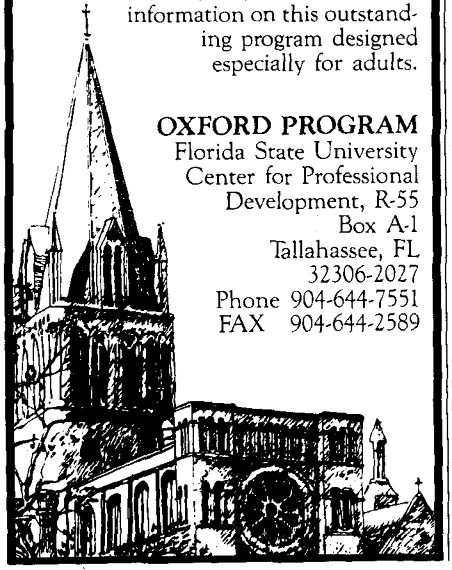

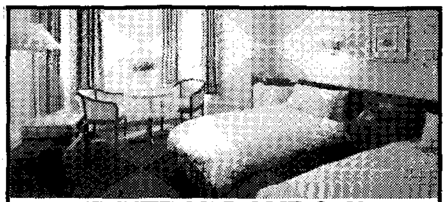

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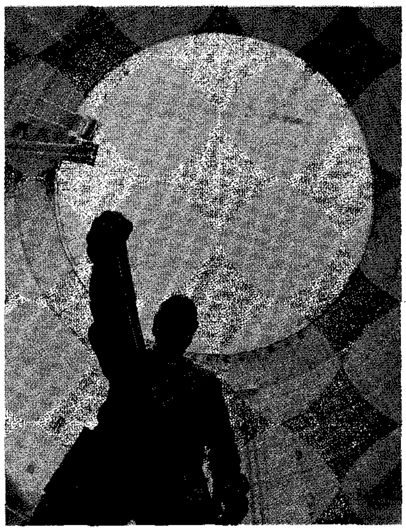

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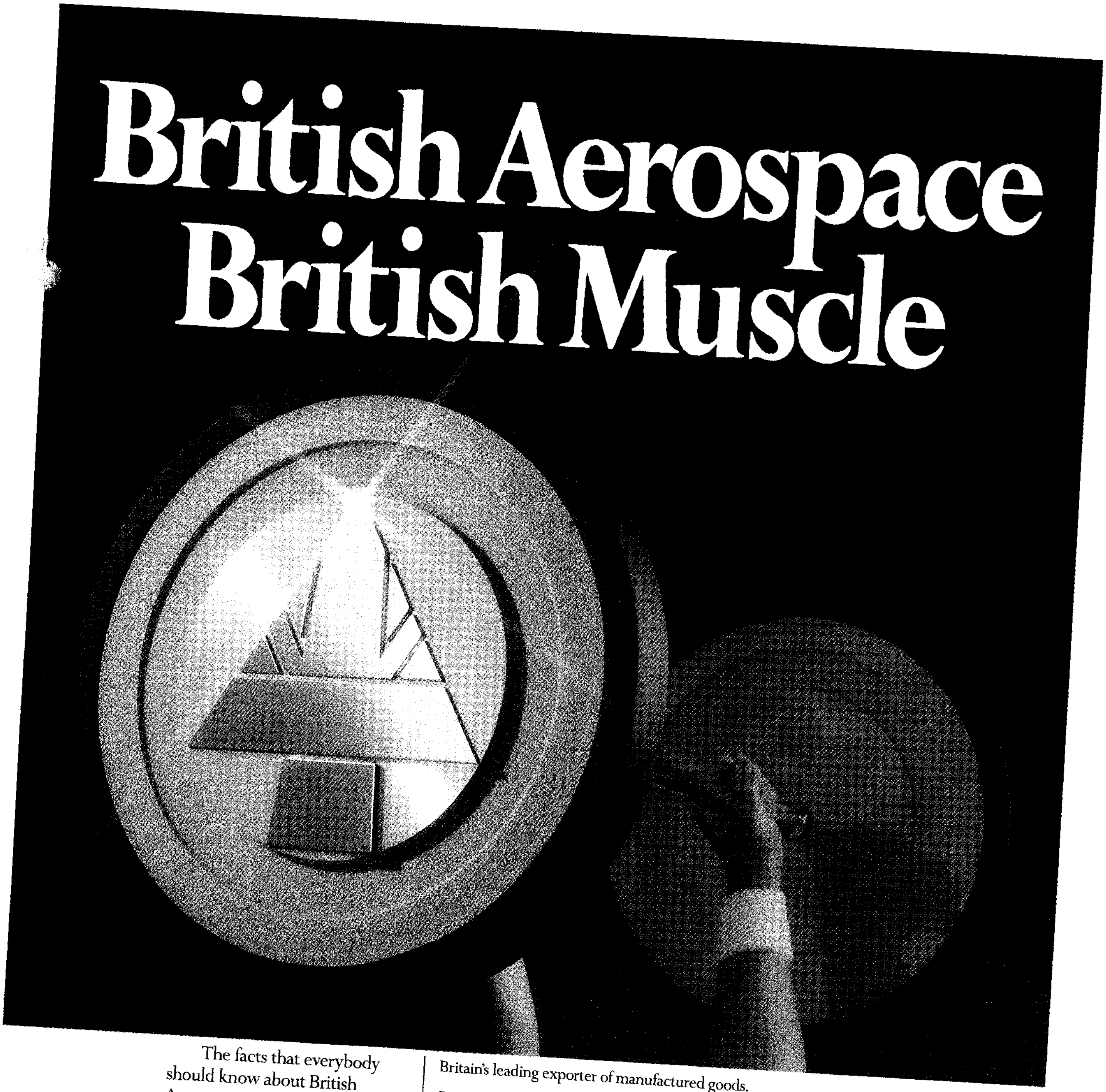

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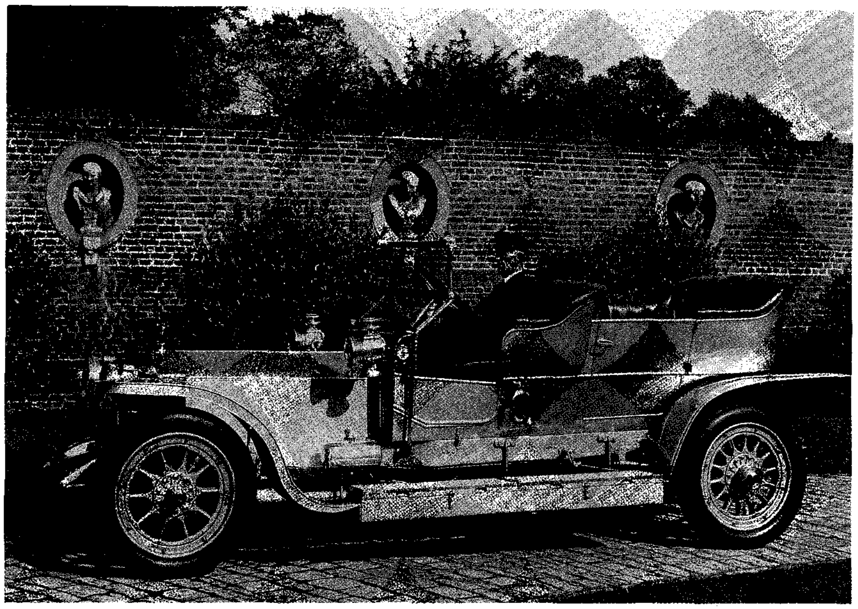

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Modern triumphs that are no less staggering include the NatWest tower in London (the tallest cantilevered building) and, of course, the trail-blazing Channel Tunnel. This feat will enable trains to run for thirty miles underneath one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world by the end of 1993.

Perhaps the greatest debt to British ingenuity, however, is owed by the field of science. Isaac Newton, Edmond Halley, and Charles Darwin aside, discoveries like the electron, holography, and black holes have placed the country firmly in the vanguard of scientific, and particularly medical, invention. In 1985, for example, four of the five top-selling medicines in the world originated in British laboratories. One of their more recent breakthroughs, and one that compellingly demonstrates the tie between technology and tradition, has actually been dredged from the Middle Ages, when leeches were used for medicinal purposes. The world's only leech farm has recently been set up in the Welsh city of Swansea, cultivating a breed of Amazonian leech and harvesting Orgelase, an extract used for the treatment of glaucoma.

THE BEST NEW BRITISH LITERATURE

Long known for literature by the likes of Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and D. H. Lawrence, Britain's stature in the world of letters has been recently enhanced by a new breed of writers. The New York *Times* maintains that their works "all represent a departure from what has come to be thought of as the typical English novel." These books are the cream of Britain's newest literary crop.

- "London Fields" by Martin Amis
- "A History of the World in 10½ Chapters" by Julian Barnes
- "Sexing the Cherry" by Jeanette Winterson
- "The New Confessions" by William Boyd
- "Chatterton" by Peter Ackroyd

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Britain's Art Beat

Perhaps it's the accumulated weight of tradition squashing out the creative juices, perhaps it's because the British put such store in being "civilized." Whatever the reason, it is truly remarkable that this one country should have produced so many great artists so consistently throughout its history.

The country's theatrical preëminence has never been seriously doubted since the days of Shakespeare, who was, as Ben Jonson put it, "not of an age, but for all time." But Britain hasn't rested on its laurels since the Bard brought drama within reach of everyman in the late 1500s. Since then it has poured out a stream of genius currently embodied by the likes of Harold Pinter, Tom Stoppard, and Alan Ayckbourn. Meanwhile, the contemporary phenomenon Andrew Lloyd Webber has transformed the stage musical with box office smashes like "Evita," "Cats," and "The Phantom of the Opera," dragging in a new era of performance everywhere from Webber's local West End to the Great White Way.

Alongside of, and contributing to, this stream of dramatic talent is Britain's bumper crop of actors. The old school (now sadly petering out), built up of characters like Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, and Alec Guinness, set the pace in the forties and fifties. That period eased smoothly into the era of Maggie Smith, Judy Dench, and Derek Jacobi. Over in the U.S., British actors like Stan Laurel, Bob Hope, Cary Grant, and Charlie Chaplin were quietly waving the flag. Now leading the charge into the 1990s comes a new body of talent, perhaps best represented by Kenneth Branagh — as courageous in his remake of Olivier's epic "Henry V" as Henry V was in doing Agincourt in the first place.

Britain's penchant for dramatic spectacles is, of course, inextricably linked with its love of a good story. Just as the U.S. looks fondly back to its oldest tales — the Wild West, Tara, and James Bowie — so Britain looks back to days of chivalry and "gentilesse" embodied by King Arthur and his search for the elusive Grail, to Robin Hood and his sense of "fair play," to the irreverent and motley group of pilgrims talking their way to Canterbury courtesy of Geoffrey Chaucer.

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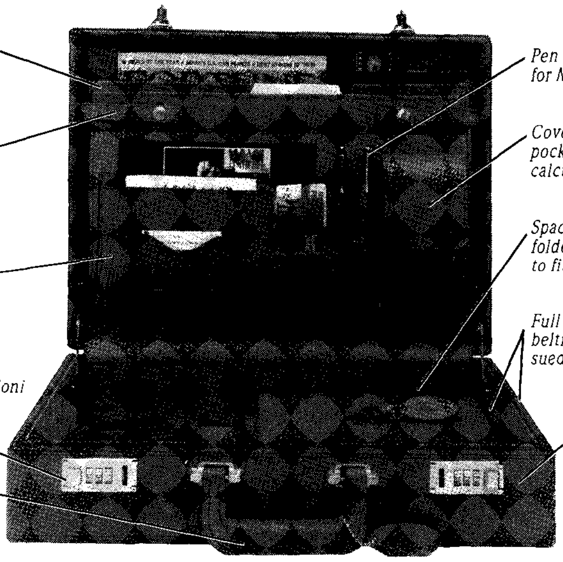

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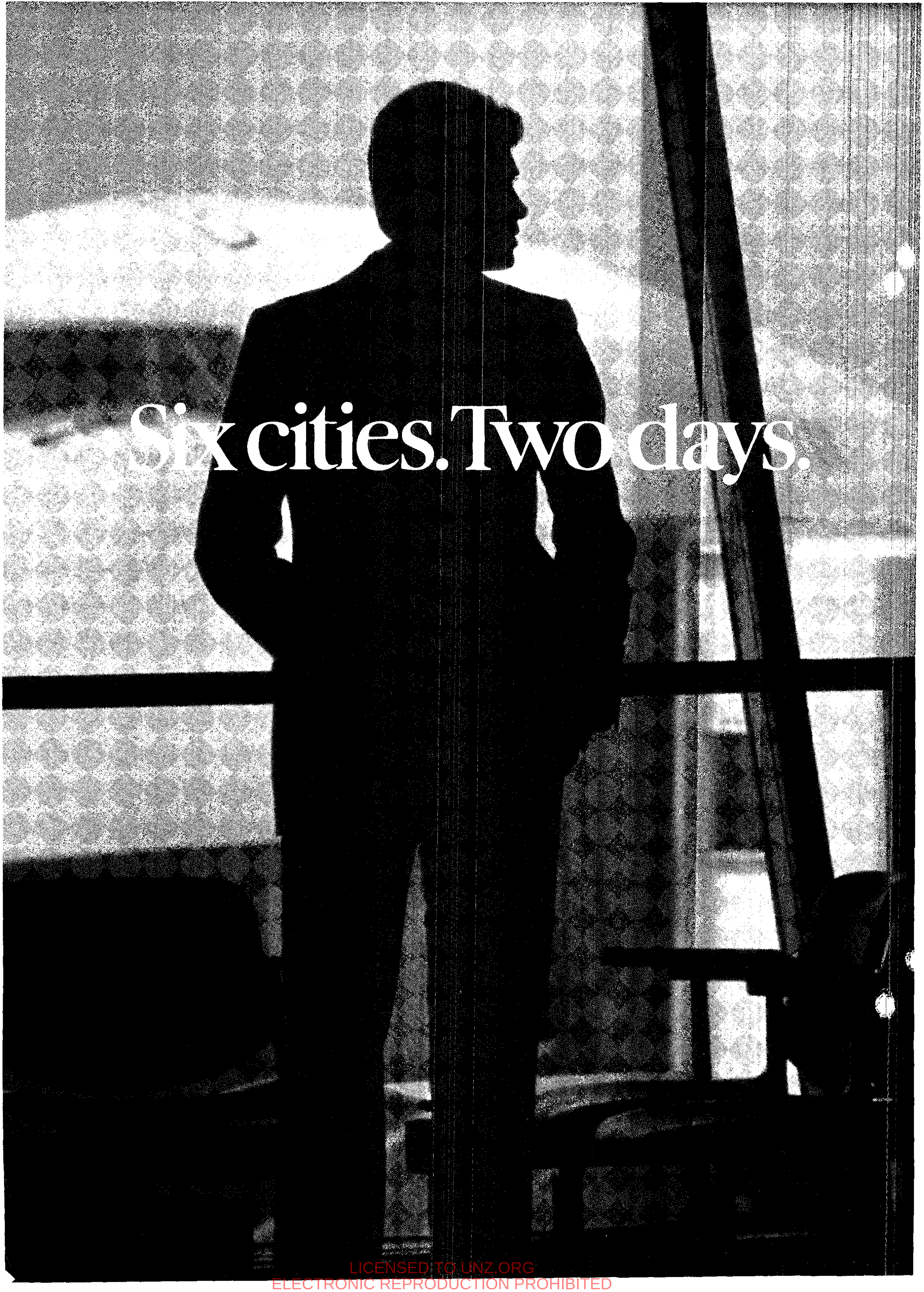
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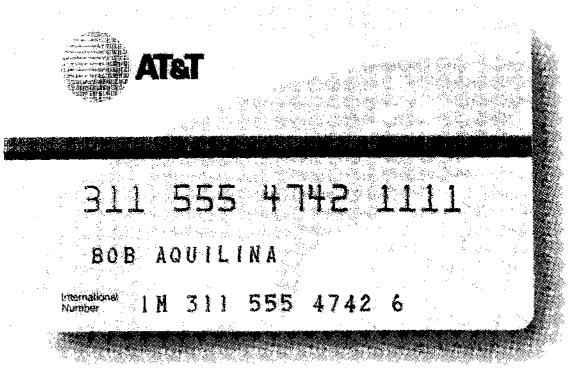

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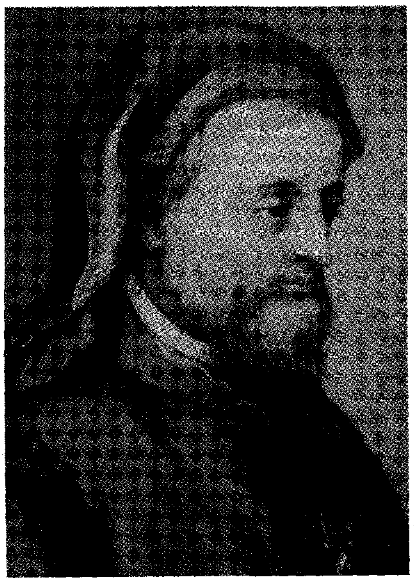
If Chaucer was, as Alfred, Lord Tennyson dubbed him, "the first warbler," many great names have followed in his tracks until today, when a new coterie of British writers is hitting the stands. The New York *Times* calls the new breed — Salman Rushdie, Julian Barnes, Jeanette Winterson, Martin Amis, Peter Ackroyd, and William Boyd, among others — "a phenomenon that has already enriched and revitalized the British novel [using] a hodgepodge of styles and post-modernist pyrotechnics."

This revitalization is the lifeblood of Britain's art beat. The British have always been considered alone unto themselves, and one direct result of this rampant individualism is that the country's artists have never gone with the flow. They have always reacted against the established norm, and done so with characteristic eccentricity.

Nowhere is this more clear than in Britain's musical tradition. Admittedly, British composers have never aspired to the league of Beethoven and Mozart, but they have nonetheless been making sound waves. Quietly. When W. S. Gilbert joined forces with Arthur Sullivan in the late nineteenth century, they made Britain stop yawning and laugh with their Savoy light operas like "The Mikado" and "H.M.S. Pinafore." A few years later Edward Elgar changed the tempo again, breathing the fresh air of modernism into serious British music with his booming "Pomp and Circumstances" (a suite including "Land of Hope and Glory").



Geoffrey Chaucer, one of the world's greatest poets

Since then Britain has rocked the world's musical boat more violently, changing its direction forever. In the sixties, the fresh-faced, mop-topped Beatles first took the stage in Liverpool, only to dominate it all over the world. Boldly innovative again, Mick Jagger, with suggestive lips and hips, and the Rolling Stones told the world they can't get no satisfaction. The subsequent list of ground-breakers is long and ever-changing as new faces — already the Stranglers, the Sex Pistols, and the Boomtown Rats are ancient history — appear at the surface of the pop industry only to disappear quickly and without trace.

THE BEST BRITISH FESTIVALS

Besides having some of the finest theatre and music available on a nightly basis in London, Britain also offers a wide array of festivals throughout the kingdom. The schedule for late 1990 and 1991 allows visitors to enjoy a variety of entertainments in many of the more interesting small cities and towns throughout the country.

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April 1991 through January 1992	Shakespeare Theatre Season, Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire
May 5 - 25	Mayfest 1991, various venues, Glasgow, Strathclyde
May 15 - 26	Perth Festival of the Arts, various venues, Perth, Tayside
May through August	Glyndebourne Festival Opera Season, Glyndebourne, near Lewes, East Sussex
May 24 - June 9	Bath International Festival, various venues, Bath, Avon
June 7 - 23	Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, Aldeburgh, Suffolk
June 26 - July 3	Shrewsbury International Music Festival, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
July 6 - 21	Cheltenham International Festival of Music, various venues, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
July 7 - 24	The City of London Festival, various venues, The City, London
July 9 - 14	Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, Eisteddfod Field, Llangollen, Clwyd
July 11 - 14	Southern Cathedrals Festival, Winchester Cathedral, Winchester, Hampshire
July 19 - September 14	Henry Wood Promenade Concerts 1991, Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London
July 20 - 27	Welsh Proms '91, St. David's Hall, The Hayes, Cardiff, South Glamorgan
August 11 - 31	Edinburgh Festival, Edinburgh, Lothian

If British music had a slow, tentative start, much the same can be said of its fine arts. British painting only began to form a recognizable school after Joshua Reynolds, the portrait painter to the rich and famous, became the first president of the Royal Academy in the mid-eighteenth century. Thereafter, its reputation grew through figures like the Suffolk landscapist John Constable, J. M. W. Turner (who anticipated the impressionists with his dramatic plays of light and shadow), and the band of expatriate Americans led by James Whistler and John Sargent.

Today the styles have changed somewhat, but British fine artists are still world class. Just look at the deep swimming pools and flat, barren plains of David Hockney's canvasses or the shockingly contorted portraits created by Francis Bacon. It's in the realm of sculpture, however, that the country is carving its name in the forefront. Whatever trend was initiated by Henry Moore's amorphous and well-rounded figures has been reinterpreted to further acclaim through the post-minimalist bronzes of sculptors like Tony Cragg and Antony Caro.

So what's the reason behind this small country's unceasing stream of great artists? Perhaps Oscar Wilde came closest to discovering the source when he said, "Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known." After all, Britain is nothing if not a group of individuals.

Andrew Bill is a free-lance writer, producer, and editor specializing in special advertising sections.

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IN late November of 1944, a physician named Harry M. Zimmerman boarded the Army troop transport Cape Cleare in San Francisco Bay and, after a layover in Pearl Harbor, completed a seven-thousand-mile journey in mid-January of 1945, when the Cape Cleare, in convoy, sailed into Guam.

Zimmerman, then forty-three, was not tall, was somewhat plump, and wore horn-rimmed glasses and smoked a pipe. An associate professor of pathology at the Yale University School of Medicine, he had been assigned to the United States Naval Medical Research Unit No. 2. The unit, composed of some two hundred corpsmen and a few dozen officer-scientists, was being assembled on the island to investigate "diseases of military importance"—malaria, infectious hepatitis, filariasis, melioidosis, hematuria, shigella, schistosomiasis, Japanese B encephalitis, and tsutsugamushi—that were threatening American troops in the Pacific theatre.

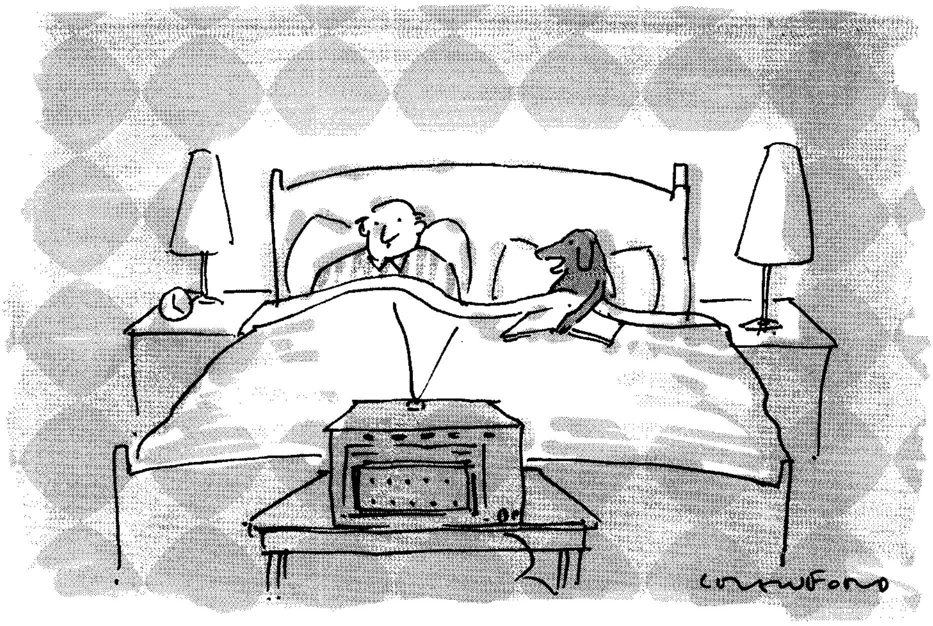
Guam, after being retaken from the Japanese the year before, served as the new headquarters of the Pacific command, and teemed with some two hundred thousand servicemen. Battleships clogged the harbors; bulldozers cleared long runways for B-29s on the forested northern plateau; half-tracks rumbled past palm trees with charred trunks and no crowns, eerie groves of giant black bristles. Agaña, the capital, on the western shore, was "as thoroughly gutted as any city could be," a newspaper report said; the "concrete, limestone and concrete-coral houses are wrecked, each and every one." While Zimmerman waited for air-conditioned Butler huts to be set up for his unit, he helped out at what remained of the civilian hospital, outside Agaña. He kept notes in a large green clothbound ledger with the word "CASH" stencilled on the cover; above that he had written "AUTOPSIES."

He performed his first autopsy on January 21st, on a twenty-year-old woman. An Army truck had run over her and fractured her skull. Zimmerman also found that she had had roundworm and tuberculosis, and had been pregnant. Later that day, he performed his second autopsy, on a sixty-five-year-old man who had died of a bacterial infection of a heart valve; the man had also suffered from hookworm. The third was performed the next day, on an eight-month-old girl; the cause of death was tubercular pneumonia, and she, too, had had hookworm. As the bodies were rolled into Zimmerman's lab, he observed, among other things, the purplish raised scars of knife and gunshot wounds and the unmistakable signs of grave vitamin deficiencies—hearts swollen by beriberi, skin inflamed by pellagra. He also saw a great many cases of parasitic worms, and the reason for the infestation, he learned, was that a lot of Guamanians had had to surrender their shoes to the Japanese, and had been going barefoot in the muck for a long time.

Zimmerman's job always began at the end; laid out on his examining table week after week were the final expressions of the brutality and deprivation of Japanese military rule, and of the scarcity in its aftermath. The island, which had been a United States possession since 1898, was so lightly defended when Japanese Imperial Forces invaded, in December of 1941, hours after the raid on Pearl Harbor, that the governor, a naval appointee, quickly surrendered. Eventually, Japanese soldiers put thousands of natives in labor camps and prison camps, where many died. Guam is forty miles from the nearest island, Rota, which was also in Japanese hands, like all the Marianas, and so there was no ready escape from Guam; a number of men and women, children and goats in tow, fled into the forest, to live in the open air and eat what they could find. The occupation lasted two and a half years.

Beginning in mid-June of 1944, American forces shelled and bombed the island for several weeks—the longest bombardment of the war. From the sky fell pamphlets telling the natives to take cover. Food became harder to find. The captors grew desperate. The New York *Times*, in a story headlined "JAPANESE CUT OFF 51 HEADS ON GUAM," reported on "one of the most bestial episodes of the war in the Pacific." In the village of Merizo, to cite another atrocity, Japanese soldiers drove men and women into caves and tossed in hand grenades, killing more than forty people. When American troops landed, in late July, islanders began staggering out of the camps and the forest. "A sadder lot I've never seen," one colonel said.

Autopsy No. 63, which Zimmerman performed on May 17, 1945, nearly a



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year after the island's liberation, was a forty-two-year-old male. The muscles of his legs were wasted, his ribs were starkly prominent, his arms were slightly twisted, his tongue was shrunken. Zimmerman suspected that the cause of death was amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, a disorder in which the long nerve fibres emanating from the spinal cord wither and disengage from leg muscles and, often, from chest and neck muscles, causing atrophy and paralysis. He confirmed his suspicion by microscopic analysis of spinal-cord tissue. A week and a half later, he did Autopsy No. 66. The case was an emaciated thirty-eight-year-old male with wasted legs. The cause of death was recorded as ALS.

Zimmerman, who in 1930 had opened the nation's first full-scale department of neuropathology, at Yale, knew everything there was to know about ALS. He knew that ALS was progressive, incurable, fatal, and mysterious in origin. Its cause was not known to be infectious, genetic, dietary, environmental, or toxic. The disease was idiopathic and sporadic. It just happened. In 1941, Lou Gehrig had died of ALS, at thirty-seven, five years after being named the American League's Most Valuable Player for the second time. Chiefly, ALS was remarkable for what it did not do. It did not run in families. It did not favor workers in certain occupations. It did not cluster. In no way did it advertise its origins. As far as was known, ALS occurred everywhere with the same low incidence: two new cases each year for every hundred thousand people. The native population of Guam in 1945 was less than twenty-four thousand. Statistically, the number of ALS cases that should have been seen there in a year ranged from zero to one.

In a one-and-a-half-page memorandum to his commanding officer—long lost, but found recently in a box of Navy letters in the National Archives, it was marked "Restricted" and headed "Progress Report of Work in the Laboratory of Pathology During May, 1945"—Zimmerman wrote:

> During the past few months there were admitted to the medical wards of the Civilian Hospital 7 or 8 patients with a full-blown clinical picture of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. This was quite surprising in view of the infrequency with which this neurologic disorder is encountered in the States. Two of the patients died during the month of May and the diagnosis was confirmed at autopsy. It is now planned to investigate the hereditary background of all these patients in the effort to throw some light on the factors concerned in the etiology of this obscure malady.

Soon after the war, doctors working on Guam discovered that ALS was far more common on the island than even Zimmerman's surprised memorandum had reported: the disease was breaking out there as it had never broken out anywhere before. Then, while studying the ALS epidemic on Guam, doctors found that a large number of Guamanians were suffering from a neurological disorder, entirely new to medicine, that impaired movement and erased memory, as if it were a dire blend of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. And quite a few patients were enduring all three diseases at once—ALS, parkinsonism, and dementia. Nothing like that had ever been documented before, either. Over the years, the epidemic on Guam, which lingers even now, has gradually shrunk in size but grown in importance. Scientists still believe that it may tell them a great deal about the origins of not only ALS but also Alzheimer's and Parkinson's—two afflictions that will probably amount to the nation's leading public-health burden in coming decades, as baby boomers grow old. One researcher, describing the broad significance of the epidemic and the often wild competition to figure it out, has gone as far as to call it "the Rosetta stone of neurology." All in all, it has been one of the most isolated, sustained, complex, intensely studied epidemics of human neurodegenerative disease in history.

A WHILE ago, I visited Zimmerman, and asked him about those first cases of ALS he had reported during the war. "I discovered that some of the patients were related," he said. "So we began to think in terms of the possibility that it was a familial, genetic type of disease. Well, we thought of it, but there was no way to prove it. What did we know about genes in 1945? We also thought of the possibility that this was an environmental thing, not an infection but maybe due to the diet. Some people still believe that that is a factor."

Zimmerman has an office at the Montefiore Medical Center and Hospital, in the Bronx, and goes to work there five days a week, sometimes six. He is eighty-nine. His hair is thick and white, his skin as smooth as a fifty-year-old's. His hands tremble slightly; if he were a surgeon, he said, he would have fully retired by now. When I asked him what the secret of his vigor was, he replied, "Genes." He was once the chairman of pathology at Montefiore and a professor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. In fact, it was Zimmerman who persuaded the physicist to lend his name to the school, in 1953, and when Einstein died, two years later, at seventy-six, Zimmerman was part of the team that did the neurological post mortem. "Einstein had a normal brain for a man his age," he says. Zimmerman has participated in thirty thousand autopsies.

"Shortly after I reported the cases from Guam, I had to curtail my activities at the civilian hospital," he said as we looked through his big green ledger of the dead. "So I never got a chance to follow up on ALS while I was there."

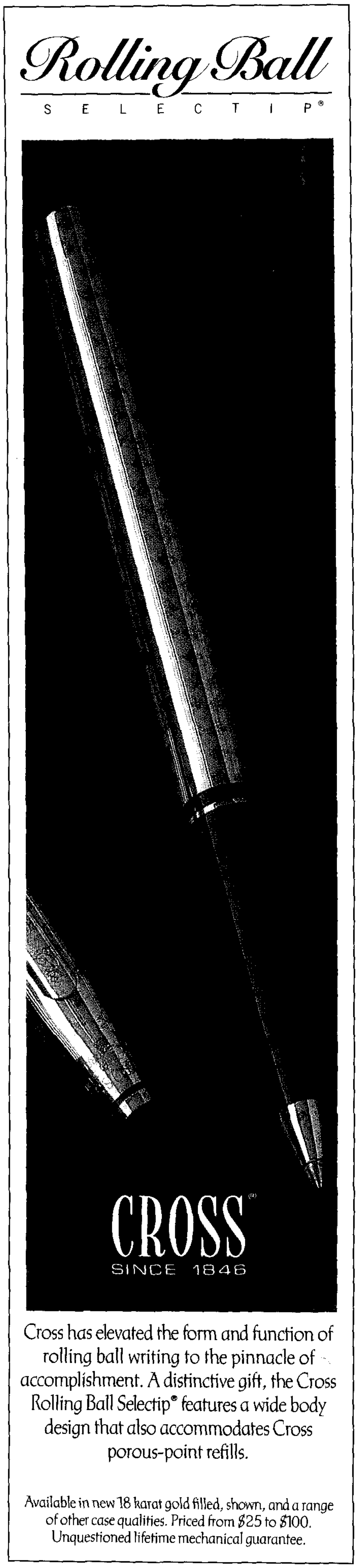
Others picked up where he left off. Three naval-reserve physicians stationed on Guam in the late forties—Arthur Arnold, Donald C. Edgren, and Vincent S. Palladino—were impressed enough by seeing several ALS patients on the wards to go looking for more patients in the villages. They found fifty. According to their calculations, approximately one out of every hundred native Guamanians between the ages of thirty and sixty-five had ALS—an incidence about a hundred times as high as the average. In their report they said they had sought a "possible etiologic factor or factors" to account for the disorder's extraordinary prevalence, but (a sigh is almost audible) "to no avail." They sent the report to the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, but it wasn't published for four years. The journal's editors had apparently found it hard to believe.

In 1951, Donald R. Koerner, a Navy physician, began a study of the disease on Guam, the results of which were published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* in December of 1952, beating Arnold and his colleagues into print by some months. Koerner, heading for the villages, took along a Navy-trained medical practitioner named José M. Torres, who was a Chamorro, or native Guamanian, and spoke the local language. In addition to examining thirty-five patients, Koerner and Torres checked 29,292 records of admission to the naval and civilian hospitals for the previous five years. All the ALS cases, they noted with amazement, were Chamorros.

A few months before the publication of Koerner's and Arnold's alarming reports, news of the ALS epidemic had begun drifting back to the States. Word reached Leonard T. Kurland, a researcher at the National Institute of Mental Health and a neurology resident at the Mayo Clinic, in Rochester, Minnesota, in the fall of 1952. The seed could not have fallen on more fertile soil. Kurland was a clinical neurologist, and he had just completed a doctorate in epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. He was interested in the patterns by which neurological diseases spread across space and time. For his doctorate he had studied the geographical distribution of multiple sclerosis in North America. Analyzing hospital and mortality records from Winnipeg and New Orleans, and taking into account economic, racial, and social differences between the two populations, he showed that MS was roughly six times as common among the Northerners as it was among the Southerners.

"When I first heard about Guam, my response was 'That's strange,'" Kurland told me not long ago. "I had just looked at the latest figures on the international distribution of ALS. In contrast with MS, this disease has a remarkably even distribution. I hadn't heard of any place where ALS was highly prevalent. So I wrote to the commanding officer of the naval hospital on Guam. He wrote back a rather sarcastic letter saying he didn't see the need for an epidemiologist on the island. He wasn't aware that there had been anything out of the ordinary. Besides, he said, there had been only twenty-seven cases of ALS that he knew of in the last few years. I was on my way."

The Navy arranged for Kurland and Donald Mulder, a staff neurologist from the Mayo Clinic and a lieutenant commander in the naval reserves, to do some studies on Guam. That was in 1953. "Back then, you couldn't go there without security clearance," Kurland recalled. "Our first visit was simply to establish that this was ALS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as it is defined in the textbooks. Clinically, it was. When we went door-to-door in the villages and looked intensively for it, we saw an incredible—an *incredible*—number of cases. A lot of the patients had already seen two doctors, Arnold and Koerner. And now I come along. The local people were becoming a bit concerned. Many of them asked, 'Why are you so interested in us? We have this problem, but people all over the world have it like this, too, don't they?' So we would tell them, 'No. There is something unusual here.'

"One of the great finds of our first trip was the death certificates. I went with José Torres to the office of vital statistics in Agaña. There, in a safe in the basement, we found these big red leather volumes going back to the turn of the century. Because they had been in a vault, they were not damaged when the city was levelled in the bombardment. They were practically the only documents that had survived. The earliest volumes were in Spanish. We went through all the death certificates and found numerous cases of '*paralytico*,' or '*lytico*.' It was also called 'progressive muscular atrophy' and, later on, 'amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.' The first death certificate that mentioned the disease was from 1902."

Once all the information from the surveys by Kurland and his co-workers had been gathered—after thousands of death certificates and hospital records had been checked, hundreds of doors knocked on, doctors and nurses and village leaders interviewed—the most puzzling fact of the disease's distribution surfaced: of a total of eighteen villages on Guam, one was, epidemiologically, off the charts. The disease was concentrated in Umatac, on the southwest shore. Umatac was the island's poorest community, with dirt roads and homes of thatched sword grass, and was its smallest, with six hundred and one people in 1952. It was also the most geographically and genetically isolated village, hemmed in by Umatac Bay and by steep hills, an island on an island, made up almost entirely of people from four interrelated families.

In 1954, writing in the *U. S. Armed Forces Medical Journal*, Mulder, Kurland, and Lorenzo Iriarte, another Navy-trained medical practitioner, emphasized the significance of the village as a sort of ground zero for ALS. "Umatac has been recognized in all the *previous surveys* as being the community with the highest prevalence of the disease. In fact," they said, moved to italics, "*one third to one fourth of all adult deaths in this village are due to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis*."

Reflecting on that early period of discovery, Kurland told me, "Epidemiologists spend their whole career looking for a geographic isolate. If you have a focus of disease, it should be easier to explain that focus than it is to explain a relatively rare event that happens out in the general population. And here was the answer to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. It was logical."

KURLAND is now a professor of epidemiology at the Mayo Clinic. Approaching seventy, he is compactly built, wears wire-rimmed glasses, and has white hair and longish white sideburns. When we met in Rochester one December Sunday, he wore bluejeans, a flannel shirt, a quilted vest, and a visored cap with the earflaps down. He has worked on the Guam problem longer and harder than anyone else, but the medical world knows him better as the man behind the Rochester Project. This is an archive of patient records at Mayo extending from early in the century up to the minute, and includes a tally of diagnoses made by doctors in surrounding Olmsted County—all told, records on more than four million people, a great number of them described from birth to autopsy. Drawing on this resource, Kurland and his associates have put a finger on virtually every case of every disease that has occurred in the county in the last seventy-five years. Thus central Minnesota has become a microcosm of American public health, a drop of the pond. An official who wants to know precisely how much abnormality is normal may consult one of four hundred Rochester studies that Kurland has written or collaborated on. They include, say, "The Incidence, Causes, and Secular Trends of Head Trauma in Olmsted County, 1935-1974," "Higher Risk of Seizures in Offspring of Mothers Than of Fathers with Epilepsy," and "Follow-Up Study on Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis in Rochester, Minnesota, 1925-1984." A National Institutes of Health internal memorandum recently described Kurland as "the gold standard" in neuroepidemiology.

Of the many medical scientists who have devoted themselves to the Guam problem, he is the only one now actively working on it who was there in the beginning. In 1956, arguing that the answer to ALS was on Guam, he persuaded the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness to open a full-time clinic and laboratory on the island. The Guam Research Center was established at Guam Memorial Hospital, on a limestone rise north of Agaña.

While Mulder and Kurland were trying to come to grips with ALS—the caseload was at its peak, with one or two new cases coming to light each month—they realized that another, yet more vexing neurological disorder was also rampant on the island. It seemed at first to have nothing to do with ALS. Its course varied somewhat, from person to person. Among its symptoms were rigid muscles, a marked stoop, a stiff gait, a shuffling step, slowed speech, and an expressionless, masklike face. Several patients had hand tremors of the types aptly described as "pill rolling" and "guitar picking."

To Kurland and his colleagues this new thing looked like Parkinson's disease, with a twist. The British physician James Parkinson, in his classic treatise of 1817, said that a patient with "the shaking palsy" nonetheless possessed "senses and intellects" that were "uninjured." But many of the Guamanians with Parkinson's disease, the two doctors saw, were also demented. "They would become forgetful," Kurland recalled. "They would lose their way, not find their way home. They couldn't remember the names of their children. Had poor memory for recent events. Became disoriented. May or may not have been depressed along with this. Sort of sat around and did very little or nothing. That accounted for what some of the locals called the disease—*raput*, which means 'laziness.' It's an unfortunate name. They aren't lazy." Another Chamorro name for it is *bodig*, after an afflicted man who had run a bodega. Some islanders call it "hurryup." No such disease then appeared in the medical literature. The researchers named it "parkinsonism-dementia complex."

Now when they went to the villages, riding in a big station wagon that doubled as an ambulance and hearse, they weren't looking just for ALS. They also asked to meet anyone who was immobilized or stooped or forgetful or dazed, or whose hands trem-

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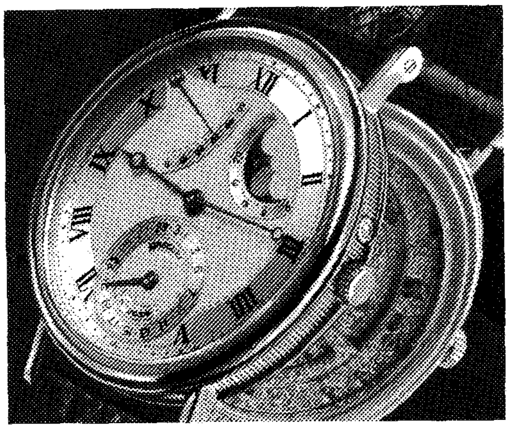

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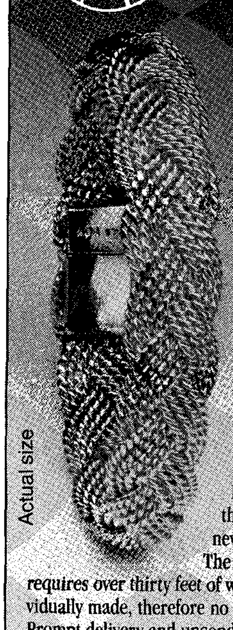

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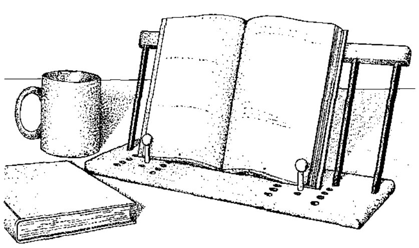

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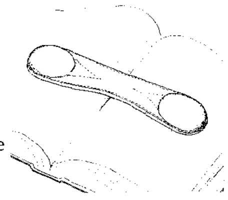

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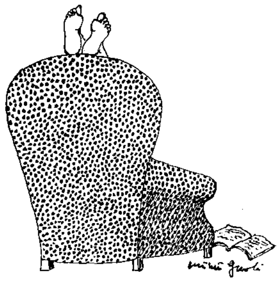
bled. A person nearing the end might be in bed, fetally curled, emaciated, mute, eyes unanswering. Going door-to-door, canvassing for parkinsonism-dementia, Mulder and Kurland found it to be nearly as common as ALS, and to be concentrated in some of the same families and villages. In Umatac, the ALS focus, the epidemic was worse than had been expected, taking more than one in three adults. The astonishing truth, Kurland once reported, was that about "one-half of the adult population in this village dies either of ALS or of . . . the parkinsonism-dementia complex."



Late in 1957, Kurland shipped the formalin-fixed brains and spinal cords of two patients—one had died of ALS, the other of parkinsonism-dementia—to Nathan Malamud, a professor of psychiatry and neuropathology at Langley Porter Psychiatric Hospital, at the University of California at San Francisco. Malamud, following the standard procedure, cut portions of the tissues into vanishingly thin slices, mounted the slices on glass slides, stained them with a silver solution, and looked at the neurons through the microscope. He saw in the brain tissues, in addition to the expected shrinkage and other signs of deterioration, a great number of neurofibrillary tangles—microscopic strands of protein jumbled inside the bodies of nerve cells. Stained and magnified, neurofibrillary tangles look like hair balls. Why neurofibrillary tangles form is unknown, but the finding surprised Malamud and Kurland, because the tangles are a signature of Alzheimer's disease. Strangely, though, the other signature of Alzheimer's—plaques of protein which build up between nerve cells—was not in evidence.

Kurland needed a neuropathologist on the spot to see if other brains had tangles, and he consulted the obvious expert, Harry Zimmerman. Zimmerman sent a collaborator and former student, Asao Hirano, who, with his new bride, went to Guam in 1959—the island's first postwar Japanese honeymooners. Hirano is now the head of neuropathology at Montefiore Hospital, and has an office across the street from Zimmerman's. Tall and elegant, he manages to be precise and jolly at the same time. When I asked how Guamanians treated him then, only fourteen years after the war, Hirano said, "They were polite." Did he feel awkward? "I was thinking about science! I wasn't thinking about war!"

Hirano performed dozens of careful post mortems on Guam. Donning gloves and mask, using an electric saw to cut the skulls along the hatline, snipping through the glistening dura membranes, severing the blood vessels and the olfactory, optic, and other cranial nerves, and removing the brains to sterile trays, he could see that they weren't merely a little shrivelled; they were practically hollow, like seeded cantaloupes. One brain, from a thirty-five-year-old woman, was three-quarters of its former mass; typically, from ten to twenty per cent of a brain had disappeared, and the shrinkage was from a loss not of water but of gray matter, of countless nerve cells. Looking through the microscope at a slice of brain tissue that should have been dotted with nerve cells, Hirano sometimes saw none at all, only neurofibrillary tangles embedded there, like the fossil remains of a mass extinction.

Tangles were everywhere. Analyzing the brains of parkinsonism-dementia patients, Hirano found neurofibrillary tangles in the cortex, where higher thoughts are processed, and in the hippocampus, where memories are laid down; destruction of these areas, which is typical of Alzheimer's disease, accounted for the dementia. He found tangles in and around the substantia nigra, a midbrain structure named for its blackish pigmentation, where fine movements are regulated by the flow of the neurotransmitter dopamine; destruction of the substantia nigra causes Parkinson's disease. And tangles, this clear-cut sign of dementia, showed up in the spinal cords from some ALS patients, a finding as out of place as footprints on the ceiling.

The neurofibrillary tangles, even more than the "paucity of neurons," as the technical publications nicely put it, would become the outstanding pathological feature of the disease on Guam. From then on, there could be little doubt, given this shared pathology, that ALS and parkinsonism-dementia were different reactions to the same destructive agent, the same insult. Any attempt to explain the origins of the

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disease had to account for the tangles, and any effort to model the disease in animals could not be deemed successful unless the animals developed those tangles along with outward neurological symptoms.

With the discovery of parkinsonism-dementia and of the tangles that tied this oddity to ALS on Guam, the epidemic suddenly became more crucial than anyone had imagined it to be. It spoke now to a wider audience. ALS is fairly rare, afflicting around seven thousand people in the United States each year, but Alzheimer's is the most common neurodegenerative disease, afflicting two in ten people over the age of seventy, and a total of four million people in the United States, and Parkinson's is the second most common, striking one in forty people over seventy, or around half a million people in the United States. If Guam offered the key to solving all three diseases at once, then this was a monumental opportunity. The answer to a variety of neurodegenerative diseases associated with aging, perhaps even the key to the nature of aging itself, was, as one doctor said, "somewhere on that damn island." And so "the Guam riddle," as Kurland calls it, acquired such a legendary allure that one eminent scientist after another has made the journey there to try to pull the sword from the stone.

FROM the mid-fifties through the seventies, epidemiological and clinical and pathological studies on the Guam patients and various inquiries into the origins of the disease were all going on simultaneously. A measure of the intensity of the work is that in those years researchers published in the medical literature more than two hundred and fifty papers on all facets of the problem. The foremost concern remained the cause. When it seemed that microbes might be involved, researchers sought microbes. Screening the blood of Guamanians for nervous-system pathogens, they found nothing pertinent. They scoured brain tissues for infectious agents. On the N.I.H. campus, in Bethesda, Maryland, the esteemed microbiologist Clarence J. Gibbs minced and extracted brain tissues removed at autopsy from diseased Guamanians, and injected the extracts into a variety of lab primates in an effort to transmit the disease. After fifteen years of such experiments, Gibbs stated—and no one disagrees—that the disease is not of infectious origin. When the researchers wondered if the disease might be inherited, as is one rare form of ALS, they sought signs of an errant gene. In one remarkable search, the geneticist Chris Plato, of the N.I.H., worked out the overlapping family histories of nearly the entire community of Umatac, covering a wall-size chart with circles and squares and interconnecting lines. But this village diagram turned up no definitive pattern typical of a disease genetically passed down the generations. Quite conclusively, then, by the mid-seventies the experts had ruled out microbes and genes as causes of the disease on Guam.

Another possibility was a nerve poison, and right away researchers turned up something that fitted into the picture almost exactly. In times of hardship and scarcity, Chamorros traditionally relied on the starch of the cycad seed, which they ate after painstakingly washing the seed of its poison and then grinding it into a coarse flour known as *fadang;* also, Chamorros had long used cycad-seed juices and raw pulp as a topical medicine for abrasions and infections of the skin. During the war, with countless families scavenging the forest, Guamanians ate more cycad seeds than at any other period in this century and, being on the run, were more likely to detoxify the seeds incompletely. Significantly, this sudden surge in the consumption and probably also the medicinal uses of cycad seeds coincided with Zimmerman's report of the ALS cases. In fact, when Marjorie Grant Whiting, the first researcher to advance the cycad hypothesis, asked Guamanians after the war what they considered to be the cause of the disease, many of them told her "*Fadang.*"

Whiting, a nutritionist, had spent two years on Ponape, in the Caroline Islands, writing a Ponapean dictionary with her husband, an anthropologist, and in 1954, as she was passing through Guam, Kurland persuaded her to stick around and look into traditional Chamorro folkways and diet. She stayed for a month in Umatac, with a family who lived next to the bay; village women who came by the house to cook and gossip found a woman with a handsome face, a strong nose, and light hair, who customarily dressed in a bright smock and sandals. Whiting would be sitting on a stump taking notes, and on Saturdays she would stay up with the women all night cooking for the fiesta after Mass. "I became an avid collector of recipes for native dishes," she recalled some years later of her approach. In 1962, she told a scientific gathering:

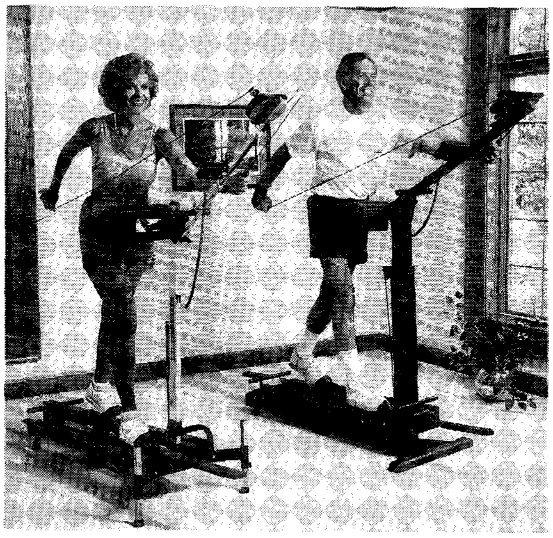
> I used such leading questions as "What do you use as a substitute when you have no store flour (or bread, or rice, or soya, or salt)?" "What would people around here eat if they had no money?" and "How did you manage to survive during World War Two?" . . .
>
> I checked reports of sudden illness and of a few deaths which reputedly followed consumption of a particular food item. Although many of these occurred years ago, survivors readily recalled the details. Some incidents followed consumption of bitter cassava, others of cycad starch. . . .
>
> In other ways also, [cycad starch] seemed to fulfill my requirements for a toxic food warranting further study. People like to eat it and although they know of its toxicity go to considerable lengths to obtain and process it. Because of its peculiar mucilaginous property it is highly desirable for making tortillas and as a thickening for other dishes. . . .
>
> On the other hand, "everyone" knows of the toxic properties of the plant. Dogs and chickens reputedly die if they drink the wash water. Preparation is laborious. Directions vary but soaking [the freshly picked seeds] is required for "several" days with "frequent" changes of water. During the process of [opening the seeds and cutting them up] some persons become dizzy and have to leave their work for a time to recover. Children are not allowed to participate in this stage of the processing. Only small amounts are given to children because many become ill when they first eat a dish made with cycad starch.

For Kurland, the potency of cycad seeds revealed itself one day when he and Whiting were visiting a Chamorro woman at home. He saw on the kitchen counter an open pot of halved cycad seeds soaking in water. He wondered why the woman would leave valuable food out and uncovered in the tropical heat. "Won't the bugs spoil it?" he asked.

"Bugs don't go near it," the woman said.

Undoubtedly, the cycad seed's chemical defense is one of the reasons for the success of the species. The cycad is one of the most ancient seed-bearing plants on earth. Its woody stem and sexual means of reproduction—cones and motile spermatozoids—rank among the high achievements of the Mesozoic Era. Cycads grew while dinosaurs roamed. In an illustration of a tyrannosaurus standing knee-deep in swamp you can usually find a cycad in the picture; it looks like a palm, only more primitive. Cycads generally have short trunks, under twenty feet, topped by long, stiff, waxy, bipinnate fronds growing in rosette formation. They are sometimes called fern trees. They bear large seeds, naked of fruit. There are about a hundred species, all tropical or subtropical, in the family *Cycadaceae*. The smallish *Cycas revoluta*, native to southern Japan, is a common ornamental; it has dark-green feather-shaped fronds, which keep fresh for a long time and are therefore used in funeral arrangements. Cycads grow all over Guam. The species that grows most abundantly on Guam, and is the most wide-ranging of all cycads, is *Cycas circinalis*. Its trunk reaches a height of ten or twelve feet. The ripe seeds are lemon-size, and cluster around the base of the fronds. Its Spanish name is *federico*. It resists fire, pests, drought. A typhoon will flatten corn crops, and even banana trees and coconut palms, but not *federico*.

Having broadened the scope of her research on cycads, Whiting reported in 1963 in the journal *Economic Botany* that parts of various cycads had been eaten or used as a medicine by native peoples of the Pacific Islands, Indonesia, Indo-China, Japan, India, Australia, East Africa, South Africa, Central America, and Florida. Nearly all cultures that consumed the plant had learned (presumably the hard way) that not only its seeds but its roots, buds, shoots, and leaves could be poisonous. To detoxify cycad stems, a native South African group, according to an eighteenth-century report, used to wrap the pith in an animal skin for two months; thus fermented, it was made into cakes. The Karawa of Australia once buried cycad seeds in grass-lined trenches for two or three months; the fermented seeds were then dug up and



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pulverized into flour for baking. The Seminoles of Florida peeled, boiled, and mashed the roots of the local cycad (genus *Zamia*), known as coontie, and added the gruel to meat stew. The pharmacopoeia of many traditional cultures, Whiting went on to say, included chews, extracts, and poultices prepared from raw or processed cycad parts—treatments for skin ulcers, wounds, boils, "diseased hair," colic, diarrhea, constipation, snakebites, insect bites, swelling, headache, neuralgia, and sexual apathy.

Whiting also compiled documentary evidence of the ill effects of cycads on livestock and human beings. Around the turn of the century, on ranches in New South Wales, Australia, thousands of cattle were plagued by acute gastrointestinal illness and, more significant, by hind-limb paralysis, probably as a result of grazing on cycad shoots and leaves. In 1929, in the same region, more than two thousand sheep were fatally poisoned after grazing on cycads. Livestock in the Caribbean have also been intoxicated by the plant. In Australia, Whiting related, cattle were said to have become "addicted" to cycad shoots, going far out of their way for them, and these addicts had been observed showing others in the herd where to get the stuff.

It is not impossible for people to become addicted to cycad seeds, but, historically, the main problem caused by the seeds has been acute poisoning. Upon arriving in Australia in 1770, a landing party of Captain Cook's found empty cycad husks near a campfire, concluded that the plant was edible, and feasted on cycad seeds; the men became violently ill. A group of Union soldiers wandering in Florida during the Civil War ate some bread made of ill-prepared coontie; several died. On Celebes, in Indonesia, juice from *C. circinalis* seeds was once used to commit infanticide. In Honduras, *Zamia* root was reserved for executing criminals. In Western Australia, in 1894, a local newspaper said that a few days after eating *Zamia* seeds a child became paralyzed from the waist down—the only reported case (and the details are sketchy) of acute cycad-induced human paralysis. In the Ryukyu Islands, south of Japan, "following World War II, several persons are reported to have died and others to have become acutely ill from eating improperly prepared cycad starch," Whiting wrote. "A physician describing his own experience said he broke into perspiration, vomited, and lost consciousness." Another incident in that region, in 1956: "Five persons died, one recovered, following use of inadequately washed and dried starch."

On Guam, cycad meal was apparently not eaten until the seventeen-hundreds, when, according to an 1819 account by a member of a French expedition, the Spanish taught the Chamorros how to detoxify and cook the material. By the early eighteen-hundreds, cycad seed was Guam's leading crop. Men and boys gathered cycad seeds in the forest, sometimes overnight, and back home the women husked and sliced the seeds, and rinsed them in numerous changes of water over days or weeks. "A bird, goat, sheep, hog or cat that drinks from the first water in which the *federico* has been soaked is apt to die," Governor Luis de Ybáñez y García observed in 1871. "This does not happen with the second; much less the third, which can be consumed without danger." How long the soaking continued and how often the rinse was changed depended on family custom—and, presumably, hunger. The washed cycad slices, after being dried in the sun, were ground into the gritty *fadang* flour. This went into dumplings or, as a thickener, into soups and stews. Most often *fadang* was mixed with water or coconut juice, made into heavy pancakes, and grilled—Chamorro tortillas, about an inch thick.

The mid-eighteen-hundreds were especially difficult years on Guam, which has had more than its share of natural and man-made disasters, and, in restrospect, those years are when it is possible to see hardship, *fadang*, and disease in the same context. Between 1847 and 1849, the island was struck by four typhoons, a tidal wave, and an earthquake. Again and again, crops died. During those years, natives relied especially heavily on cycad seeds to survive. Then, in 1856, Guam's Spanish governor, Felipe María de la Corte (according to a recent translation by the historian Marjorie G. Driver), cautioned against eating the seeds: "There are constantly epochs of the year during which a great portion of the population, being without maize and other articles of food used here, finds itself obliged to fall back on *federico* and other fruits and roots of the forest which cannot fail to do them injury either from their being essentially harmful, or because the organic system suffers from the repeated changes from one kind of food to another." The Governor urged that natives be dissuaded "gradually from using those articles which are harmful and which, according to best reports, are the origins of the country's endemic illnesses which have become hereditary, often causing premature aging and short life."

It doesn't appear that Guamanians followed the Governor's recommendation for long, if at all. At the turn of the century, William E. Safford, an American naval officer, a botanist, and Guam's vice-governor from 1899 to 1900, noted that after typhoons the natives, "who very seldom have a reserve on hand, are obliged . . . to go to the forest for wild yams and nuts of *Cycas circinalis*." In the nineteen-thirties, a man who lived in Merizo, the village next to Umatac, wrote in his journal (quoted in "Guam and Its Peo-

Go-Between

ple," by Laura Thompson) that his family harvested cycad seeds from January to June. And then, as one middle-aged Guamanian told me, "back in the Japanese occupation, when they kicked us out of our homes, we moved to the jungle and that's what we had to eat—*fadang*. We'd eat it more than once a day, along with whatever else was around."

Fifteen years after the war, Whiting and Kurland proposed to the scientific community that cycad seeds, processed and eaten or used as a medicine, were a plausible cause of ALS and parkinsonism-dementia on Guam—although, to be sure, not one case of ALS or parkinsonism-dementia had been directly tied to a cycad-seed meal or treatment. The theory was compelling. In the sixties and early seventies, the N.I.H. held six scientific conferences on the toxicity of cycad seeds. The ideas generated at the conferences generated experiments. Scientists around the world subjected birds, mice, rats, guinea pigs, cows, horses, pigs, and monkeys to cycad seeds, extracts, or flour. In Bombay, a neuropathologist, Darab K. Dastur, made pancakes using cycad starch and fed them to three rhesus monkeys for several months; he observed that one of the monkeys developed severe weakness and muscle wasting in one arm. In Japan, years earlier, chemists had discovered a cancer-causing substance in the cycad seed and named it "cycasin"; now other scientists showed that it was the most powerful natural carcinogen yet identified: when it was given to pregnant mice, tumors blossomed. In Bethesda, researchers gave doses of a cycasin derivative to pregnant rats and observed that the newborns had shrunken brains—an interesting but little-pursued observation. At King's College, London, the biochemists Arthur Bell and Peter Nunn discovered another cycad-seed toxin, beta-N-methylamino-L-alanine, or BMAA—an amino acid—and injected it into hatchling chicks. With an objectivity bordering on surrealism, they reported, "The birds tended to 'run backwards' (a surprising and often very rapid motion). Birds fell over and were unable to get up. . . . Some birds showed violent spasms during which they chirped continuously."

In the end, though, after all the attempts, no one was able to show that cycad material given to laboratory or farm animals led to a disorder resembling either ALS or parkinsonism-dementia, or that it specifically damaged the brain or the spinal ganglia involved in those disorders. And no test of cycad-seed chemicals had induced animal brains to form the telltale neurofibrillary tangles. Obvious though the cycad hypothesis seemed, it had been impossible to prove—or, for that matter, to refute.

Meanwhile, more bad news for the Kurland and Whiting theory came in from the field. In the mid-sixties, Yoshiro Yase, a neurologist at the Wakayama Medical College, in Japan, documented an outbreak of ALS and parkinsonism-dementia in the Kii Peninsula, southeast of Osaka; and although cycad trees grew in Japan and had been harvested in the past, Yase said that the patients in the Kii Peninsula had not eaten cycad-seed products. At around the same time, D. Carleton Gajdusek, a pediatrician and virologist at the N.I.H., in the course of investigating in New Guinea a neurological

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disease known as kuru—work that later won him a share of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine—happened upon an ALS epidemic among the Auyu and Jakai groups, in the red-soiled coastal lowlands of Irian Jaya (formerly West New Guinea). Gajdusek, one of the most highly regarded and most outspoken medical scientists in America, said that cycad seeds had nothing to do with ALS in Irian Jaya.

With such discouraging reports from the lab and the field, most scientists concerned with the problem on Guam dismissed the cycad hypothesis. The theory, one scientist flatly asserted, was "unique but negative." It had been championed for so long against mounting criticism that some called it "Kurland's folly." At the last cycad conference, held in Chicago in 1972, it fell to Kurland to summarize where the hypothesis stood. He conceded only that "there is not sufficient evidence to support any action with regard to the use of cycad as a food on Guam since no toxic effect has been observed in feeding adult animals experimentally with a few samples of prepared cycad flour."

The lack of action still worries him. Once, in the sixties, he suggested to Guam's governor that an official warning be issued against the consumption of cycad seeds. The governor, Manuel F. Leon Guerrero, a proud man and only the second Chamorro to reach the office, wanted to know what sort of hard evidence Kurland had to show that the seeds actually caused *lytico* and *bodig*. *Fadang*, the Governor said, was a delicacy, a taste of home; it had got Guamanians through the war, and *he* wasn't about to announce that it brought on the scourge unless Kurland could prove it—and, of course, Kurland couldn't. "I personally like cycad," the Governor said, and, as Kurland remembers the conversation, they left it at that.

BY the time I went to Guam, in February of 1989, for a couple of weeks, I'd gathered that the epidemic was all but over, that the cycad hypothesis was being revived but that a local mineral imbalance had also been proposed as the cause of the disease, that no Guamanians really ate cycad seeds anymore, and that the island was basically a godforsaken rock where Air Force bombers stood behind chain-link fences like vultures dozing in the tropical sun. I'd formed just enough mistaken impressions to make the reality of the place interesting.

The largest and southernmost of the Mariana Islands, Guam is thirty-eight hundred miles west of Honolulu, fifteen hundred miles south of Tokyo, nine hundred miles north of the equator. Ever since Magellan "discovered" the island, in the early fifteen-hundreds, it has been important to people on their way someplace else. In Spanish times, it provisioned galleons on the Acapulco-to-Manila run. The United States grabbed it for a Pacific outpost in the Spanish-American War. For the Japanese Empire it was, briefly, a gateway to Micronesia. More recently, for the United States military, which owns a third of the island, it has been a dock and runway near Asia, and then some. During the Vietnam War, Guam lost a greater percentage of its men in action than any state did.

The island is shaped like a peanut: thirty miles from north to south, eight miles across at its widest, and four and a half at the waist. The northern and southern halves differ starkly in geology, community life, and patterns of neurological disease. The north is a coralline plateau, no more than a few hundred feet high—the lithified remains of reef deposits that aeons ago rose above the sea. At construction sites and roadcuts, the exposed rock looks as white as meringue. There are no permanent rivers or streams or ponds in the north; rainwater dribbles through the porous limestone, collecting in sea-level aquifers, and by the time it comes out of the tap it is high in calcium, and is about as hard as water can get. It clings to your skin and feels vaguely gritty.

Most of the island's hundred thousand residents and twenty-five thousand service personnel and dependents live in the north. Agaña, levelled in the war, now resembles an outlying section of San Diego: the echo of Spanish names, low-slung office buildings, the glare of sunlight on cars stuck in traffic, parking lots shimmering with heat. The big resort hotels are on Tumon Bay, a crescent beach northeast of Agaña which is trying hard to be Waikiki. The trade is primarily Japanese. A lot of the Japanese tourists I saw were young and retro-Americanized, sporting penny loafers and spit curls, and smoking Marlboros. Tokyo businessmen find that it is cheaper to buy a condominium on Guam and fly there weekends for golf than to join a country club at home. In northern Guam, you see beefy Americans in the sing-to-the-video *karaoke* bars—one night a sunburned, crewcut guy gave a raucously patriotic interpretation of "Born Free"—and you see bashful Japanese women in the "Wild West" shooting galleries blowing away paper targets with Smith & Wesson .357s. Business booms. The Guam Hilton is the most heavily booked Hilton on earth.

The south, everyone likes to say, is the old Guam. As you drive across the slope that divides the northern plateau from the southern range, you are suddenly climbing back in time, into wind-scoured bush where carabao are tied up in the shade and banana bunches hang from rickety porches. Starting just below the island's narrow midsection, rivers appear, flowing over volcanic rock. The south is a terrain of weathered ridges and valleys. Mt. LamLam, a few miles outside Umatac, is thirteen hundred feet high. Where the steep hillsides have eroded, the clays are exposed in great blood-red patches, as if skinned. The red comes partly from oxidized compounds of aluminum, a metal that has figured in recent theories about the origins of the neurological disease on Guam.

The road into Umatac winds over mountains, yielding spectacular pull-over views of the forested ravines and coast. The Japanese tour buses pull over. The Sunday-driving servicemen pull over. A few times on my way to Umatac, I pulled over at the legendary spot where, years ago, Kurland and another scientist once stood beholding the distant bayside village, the steeple of its white church visible above the palms. One afternoon, the story goes, Kurland and his successor at the Research Center, an infectious-disease specialist named Jacob Brody, stood on this precipice: one scientist facing an opportunity, the other turning away from it after a decade of frustrated searching. Kurland said how disappointed he was not to have found the sure answer. Brody, the new man, taking in Umatac with a sweep of the arm, said: "The answer is down there. If only we're not too stupid to find it."

I was accompanied on my first trip to Umatac by John Steele, a neurologist. Steele—Canadian, tall, blond, blue-

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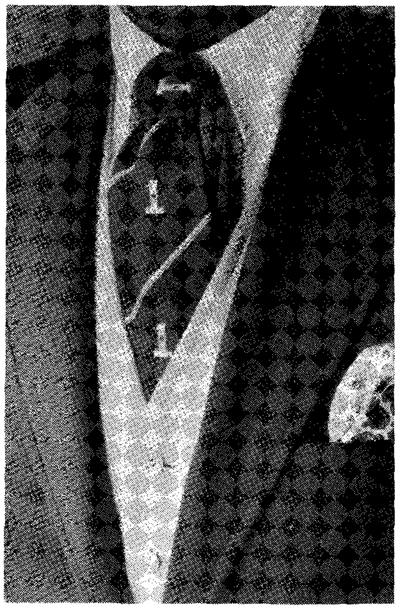

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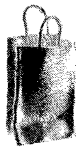

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eyed, very polite—came to Guam in 1983 after five years in the Marshall Islands. He told me that, in the grand neurological tradition of Drs. Parkinson, Alzheimer, and Huntington, there was a disorder bearing his name: the Steele-Richardson-Olszewski syndrome, also called progressive supranuclear palsy, which he and his fellow-nomenclatees described in Toronto in the early sixties. Actually, he said, the more Guam cases he saw, the more some of them looked like *his* disorder, an unusual form of parkinsonism of unknown origin distinguished by impaired eye movements. He took me to meet one of his patients.

We stopped on the edge of the village, at the home of a man I'll call Pedro, who was then in his fifties (he has since died) and had developed both parkinsonism-dementia and ALS some years before. Pedro lived in a metal-roofed wooden house a few yards from Umatac Bay. Chickens were strutting around under the palm trees. You could fish off the front steps. Steele and I, following Chamorro custom, removed our shoes at the door. The front room was large and tidy. A couch and soft chairs and a big console television were at one end, and the kitchen was at the other. Pedro's wife, wearing a floral housedress, offered us a glass of orange juice, then sat at the kitchen table wearily smoking a cigarette. Pedro was in a wheelchair in front of the television watching "Airport '77."

He was a handsome man with short black hair, a square jaw, fine white teeth, bloodshot eyes. He was wearing a white T-shirt and a diaper, and a white towel was draped across his bare legs. His feet were bare and statue still. He greeted me with a firm handshake and a smile. Steele asked how Pedro was feeling. His wife said, "He is not feeling too well." Steele asked Pedro how his grandchild was. At that, Pedro's eyes narrowed, his shoulders began slowly pumping, and he began to cry, though with no tears and no sound. Steele asked him if he was sad. He nodded yes. "Pedro doesn't feel well," his wife said.

Steele held open one of Pedro's eyelids with a thumb and forefinger and told him to watch and follow his other hand, which he slowly lifted toward the ceiling. "Come on, Pedro, look up. See if you can do it, Pedro—look up, look up." Pedro's eyes were stuck. Steele asked Pedro's wife if it would be O.K. to film this exam—a video recorder was in the car—because it showed that Pedro had an important problem with his eye movement.

"Pedro is not feeling well today," she said. "Maybe some other time."

As we were leaving, Steele pointed out three black-and-white photographs near the door, hanging above a glass display cabinet in which many lovely shells were arrayed. One photograph was of Pedro's sister-in-law as a young woman, looking quite robust. Another showed her years later, her gaunt face against a pillow, her strength and her flesh stolen by ALS. The third showed Pedro and his wife many years before: they stood arm in arm in bright sunlight, she very pretty, with curled hair and a cheerful dress, and Pedro looking sharp in pleated trousers.

Driving into the village, Steele explained that Pedro had the impaired blinking reflex that is typical of parkinsonism, and, on top of that, had an ocular disorder known as "gaze palsy," which is a sign of the Steele-Richardson-Olszewski syndrome. Someone with gaze palsy can't roll his eyes, and when he tilts his head back to try to look upward, that doesn't work, either, because his eyes remain level, as a doll's do. Steele said Pedro also had a disorder of the brain stem, associated with ALS and parkinsonism-dementia, which prompts spontaneous outbursts of crying or laughing. Sometimes, Steele said, tears will be pouring down a patient's face, and if you ask him what's wrong he says "Nothing."

UMATAC is on a narrow terrace that fronts a U-shaped bay. Its situation is precarious. Facing southwest, the village gets hammered by storms—again and again, for Guam is at the center of a typhoon belt. A few hundred yards back from the sea, the hills rise steeply. Fresh water blesses the village, which for centuries was little more than a rest stop. A former Spanish governor said of Umatac in 1870, "It ekes out a wretched existence with the help of the ships which have to go there for water. It lies at the foot of a mountain range, which leaves it no room for fields; nor can it be reached by any road."

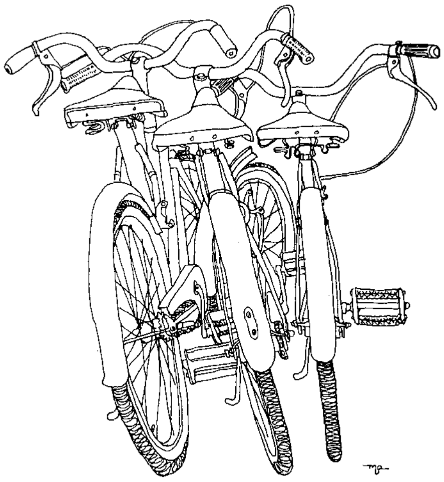
Driving down the neat, shoreside main street, you see that this is, as the travel writers put it, "Guam's most picturesque village." Along the street are some small houses; a couple of bodegas, where you can buy pickled slices of mango or Japanese radish out of big jars next to the cash register; a hamburger stand, whose proprietor, a middle-aged woman, told me, "We are tired of being guinea pigs, we don't want to be known as the *lytico* and *bodig* people"; a mission-style church, white with red trim; a typhoon-proofed elementary school; the village commissioner's windowless office, of whitewashed cinder block. Between the bay and the office is a small park, and in the shade of magnificent banyan trees are picnic tables, barbecue grills, and an obelisk with a plaque that reads "FERDINAND MAGELLAN LANDED NEAR THIS PLACE, MARCH 6, 1521."

The sixth of March, Discovery Day, is a bigger holiday than the Fourth of July, even though so many of the island's troubles began the moment the three ships that remained of Magellan's circumnavigational fleet appeared offshore. Magellan had been sailing for more than three months since rounding the Horn; many men had died of scurvy, and others, their gums bleeding with the effort, were now eating leather, rats, and sawdust. The ships were met by dugout canoes with sails of woven fronds, boats so fast that the Spaniards likened them to flying fish, carrying gargantuan, dark-skinned Chamorros, who had never seen ships, whites, or iron. Thrilled by the ships' iron fastenings, the *indios* tore some away, and they stole a skiff as well. Ashore a few days later, after provisioning the ships, Magellan's men, in retaliation, burned down forty or fifty huts and killed seven Chamorro men. Magellan then sailed for the Philippines, where he was killed. He had named the ocean Pacific, but called the island Isla de los Ladrones, or Island of Thieves. That name appeared on European maps for centuries. Guam has had a public-relations problem ever since.

Right across the street from Umatac's Magellan monument is the overgrown ruin of San Dionisio Church; it dates from the late seventeen-hundreds, about when Chamorros gave in to Catholicism. (During the seventeenth century, brutal wars against the Spanish, together with epidemics of unfamiliar infectious diseases, imported by missionaries and soldiers, nearly extinguished the Chamorro race, reducing the population from around forty thousand to three thousand. From then on, not surprisingly, the Chamorros were easily converted—a process that, ironically, the Spanish called *reducción*.) Behind the church ruins is an enormous old mango tree that figures in a legend about the origins of ALS and parkinsonism-dementia—a legend that shows how history, faith, and disease are entwined in the local philosophy.

Kurland heard it on one of his earliest trips to Umatac. "When we talked to the patients and their families, most of them wouldn't tell you anything," he recalled. "They would clam up when you wanted to go into the background of why the diseases were here. Then we heard the legend, and traced it back to around 1815. The story was that someone aroused the ire of the Umatac priest by repeatedly stealing mangoes from the tree in the churchyard. The priest kept warning him not to do it. Finally, the priest cursed the man and his family with this terrible disease. So, many of the people we spoke to believed that if you developed the disease you were in effect admitting that you were a descendant of a thief. It certainly didn't make history-taking any easier."

DEBBIE QUINATA is a sort of free-lance liaison-activist for *lytico* and *bodig* patients. She lives on an oceanfront ranch on the south edge of Umatac. Her husband, Cory, banged together their plywood-and-two-by-four house after a fire wrecked their last place. It has no screens or glass in the windows, no front door. Geckos scurry up and down the walls, chirping. You especially notice the lizards' chirping, because snakes have killed all the songbirds on the island, leaving the forests spookily silent. Looking around the Quinatas' property, you conclude that the wilderness has won. But beneath the tangles of vines are fruit trees, and at a roadside stand the family sells papayas, coconuts, oranges, mangoes, star apples, and ice-cream bananas more luscious than the name implies.



Debbie worries that researchers are too cold with villagers and patients. When some doctors resurveyed Umatac for disease a while ago, she tried to lead what she calls a "revolt of the specimens." Her cousin Greg Quinata did revolt, and she wanted me to meet him. He seemed to be the village cynic. We sat on her porch. Greg, who was in his late forties, sported a sky-blue baseball hat emblazoned with a palm tree, a rainbow, and the slogan "Have a Chamorro Day!" Debbie served coffee and Twinkies.

"This is the *bodig* stuff right here, man," Greg said, reaching for a Twinkie. "My complaint is that the doctors don't come back and say, 'Your blood turns yellow when it goes to the lab,' or whatever," he went on. "They come and they bang on your joints, they look in your ears, they take your blood, your hair. All these different doctors who keep coming through here—they should compare notes. At one time, they blamed the disease on the water in the south. I don't know why they always blame the south."

When I asked about the cycad hypothesis, he said, "They jumped the conclusion. People have *lytico* in the States, they don't eat *fadang*, so what the hell? To blame the disease on that particular fruit, the *fadang*— Christ, the process you have to go through to get that stuff cured! Good grief, *everybody* ate that stuff. In my recollection, they use raw *fadang* material for open wounds. It works pretty good, too. I never used it, but I've seen it used like that. I still eat *fadang*. It's delicious."

Debbie, who belongs to a medical-ethics committee at the University of Guam, showed me a transcript of a scientific conference of many years ago, at which Kurland referred to Umatac as a "living laboratory" for the study of nervous-system diseases. The offending phrase was heavily underlined. She also showed Greg and me a joke on the great medical mystery. It was a jigsaw puzzle made from a large color photograph of Umatac and its bay. There was one piece missing. It said, across the top, "THE UMATAC PUZZLE" and, across the bottom, "Help

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find the missing piece . . . just call Dr. Steele.”

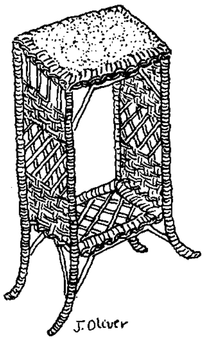
A MAN I’ll call Juan lives with his family in a typhoon-proofed cinder-block home on a hill in Umatac. His wife has ALS. The day I stopped by, she was in a wheelchair, wearing a pretty cotton dress, and she greeted me with a huge, radiant smile. She speaks in a way that only Juan and her children comprehend. Afflicted now for two decades, she is among the longest-surviving ALS patients anywhere. She sat becalmed in the living room watching a game show while Juan and I sat on the shady concrete patio in the back yard. Sometimes a rooster squawked, feebly, as if he were about to conk out from the heat. Juan, in his mid-fifties, is wiry and, like a lot of Guamanian men, has a military aspect; he smokes cigarettes, has short hair, wears a white T-shirt around the house. On a chain around his neck hung a gold crucifix.

“I have to keep in mind that she’s not going to get well,” he said. “She’s going on twenty years now with the disease. My youngest son is twenty-one. He was one year old when she came down with it. I remember when she was stricken. She was putting my son to bed one night, and she noticed there was a numbness in her hand. I massaged her hand with coconut oil and Vicks. A few days later, she said, ‘The numbness is going up, in both arms now.’ It just kept going like that. In four or five years, it was all over her body. She can still move her hands, but not her feet. I have to move her feet for her. When I got out of the service, I worked first for the senior citizens. Now I work at the Department of Mental Health, as a psychiatric technician. I know we don’t have it that bad here. We have computers and cars and other things. I know there are places where children are poor and starving. So many people have brought my wife gifts, jewelry, and so forth. I told her, ‘You have so many chains and necklaces, you look like Mr. T.’ ”

When I asked Juan about cycad seeds, he said, “During the war, my wife’s family was strict about food, especially *fadang*. They said you have to soak the *fadang* for two weeks or more before eating it. Actually, they hardly ate *fadang*. I don’t believe that *fadang* is the cause of *lytico* and *bodig*. A lot of people have been eating that, and they aren’t sick. All these doctors come by here. The last time, they wanted to take blood and some hair from my wife. I asked, ‘When are you going to tell me the results?’ I still haven’t heard from them. But I never really had problems with doctors. I say, ‘Send them down.’ I welcome anybody who comes to this house for information. I don’t think of us as guinea pigs. If they find a cure, I’m happy not just for us but for the whole world.”

IN the seventies and early eighties, after the downfall of the cycad hypothesis, the Guam research took some curious turns. The then dominant scientific camp, led by Gajdusek, who had assumed control of the Guam N.I.H. Research Center, argued that the disease was related to an unusual mineral imbalance—a chronic dietary deficiency of calcium coupled with an excess intake of aluminum. The theory was based partly on the observation that in the north, with its hard water and chalky, calcium-rich soils, the disease was much less common than in the red-earth south, where, the scientists suggested, Guamanians consumed too little calcium and too much aluminum. Furthermore, analyses of soil and water taken from the two other ALS clusters in the western Pacific—in the Kii Peninsula of Japan and on the lowland delta of Irian Jaya—turned up the same odd lack of calcium and abundance of aluminum.

According to the theory, a lifelong diet deficient in calcium would so starve the body of the essential mineral that its tissues, to compensate, would absorb from food, and then retain, far more than the usual quota of metals such as iron and aluminum; these metals, which may be toxic to cells, over the years would damage specific nerves of the brain and spinal cord, leading to ALS and parkinsonism-dementia. (The general notion that a grave mineral deficiency could devastate nerve function was not without precedent: for instance, Gajdusek and others had shown that a pregnant woman who has not consumed enough iodine risks giving birth to a cretin.) The size of the Guam epidemic, to be sure, had gradually diminished after its peak, in the early sixties, and the reason for the decline, the mineral camp argues, was that Guamanians had meanwhile adopted a more Americanized diet, presumably higher in calcium. And so Gajdusek and his colleagues, including the neurologists Yoshiro Yase and Kwang-Ming Chen and the anthropologist Ralph M. Garruto, advocated the low-calcium, high-aluminum theory for years. They performed experiments in which they raised rabbits and primates on low-calcium, high-aluminum diets, and found that some of the animals had mildly damaged brains. And the researchers published papers in distinguished journals which convinced a number of medical scientists that the answer had at last been discovered. The good news also spread to the people of Guam. In 1984, the Guam legislature honored Chen, a friendly and devoted physician, for his two decades of caring for patients on Guam and for his "brilliant work" on the mineral theory. "It appears," the legislature happily proclaimed, "that the etiology of this most elusive disease . . . may have been found, and its prevention or treatment may be on the horizon."



On the horizon, though, the mineral theory ran into serious trouble. The most persuasive argument against it was simply that southern Guamanians do not and probably never did consume too little calcium. In one remarkably straightforward criticism, presented at a scientific meeting in 1988, Steele arranged for the assay of a few springs near Umatac, and found that the only low-calcium spring is the one that Gajdusek's team happened to test; the other local springs have normal if not unusually high calcium levels, indicating that Umatac's fresh water did not lack the mineral. Other researchers have shown that locally gathered foods have plenty of calcium. For instance, traditional Guamanians, who live close to the land (and have the island's highest rates of disease), tend to eat a great deal of local fish; these are small fish from coastal waters and are typically eaten whole, calcium-rich bones included. Kurland, summing up the confusion created by the mineral theory, characterized the work of the rival researchers by a word that for him must be the equivalent of "obscene": "sloppy." He said to me, "It always struck me as odd that they would propose a shortage of calcium on an island that is mostly coral." Expressing a not uncommon opinion of Gajdusek, Kurland added, "He's had a brilliant scientific career, but that doesn't mean he hasn't made some mistakes."

If the scientific controversies surrounding the Guam research were as remote from daily life as, say, the race to find some transient subatomic particle, the groping for answers wouldn't matter much to anyone besides the scientists. But the problem on Guam is a most human one. It's fair to assume that in the seventies and eighties some islanders accepted the idea that a mineral imbalance caused the local disease, and, thus reassured, gave little thought to the not disproved dangers of eating cycad-seed products. The false security that the calcium theory offered had another effect: it was one of the reasons that N.I.H. officials in Bethesda felt justified in closing the Guam Research Center, which they did in 1986.

Gajdusek believed that the facility had become an unnecessary drain on diminishing N.I.H. resources, especially in the light of certain reports claiming that the disease had all but disappeared from the island. "If anybody wants to work on Guam," he told me, "it's no problem to just go there, and one can get anything done with zero logistical support in forty-eight hours or two weeks or forty-eight days, or whatever it takes. My attitude is that all that can be scientifically done can be done without the lab."

Kurland, who had founded the center thirty years before, said that shutting it down was "a shame." Olivia Cruz, a Chamorro physician who has worked for the N.I.H. intermittently for twenty years, suggested that the lab's closing wasn't fair to the island's people, who had coöperated with the researchers for so long. "All of a sudden, the N.I.H. dropped it," she said. "And, really, they didn't ask the people of Guam. They didn't ask the doctors —you know, 'We are thinking of closing up the unit. What is your feeling?' Nothing. The N.I.H. just pulled out."

By that time (to take inventory), during three decades of doing research and providing free medical care on the island the N.I.H. had spent many millions of dollars; no one had found an indubitable explanation for the disease; ALS had been diagnosed in approximately four hundred and sixty people on Guam, and parkinsonism-dementia

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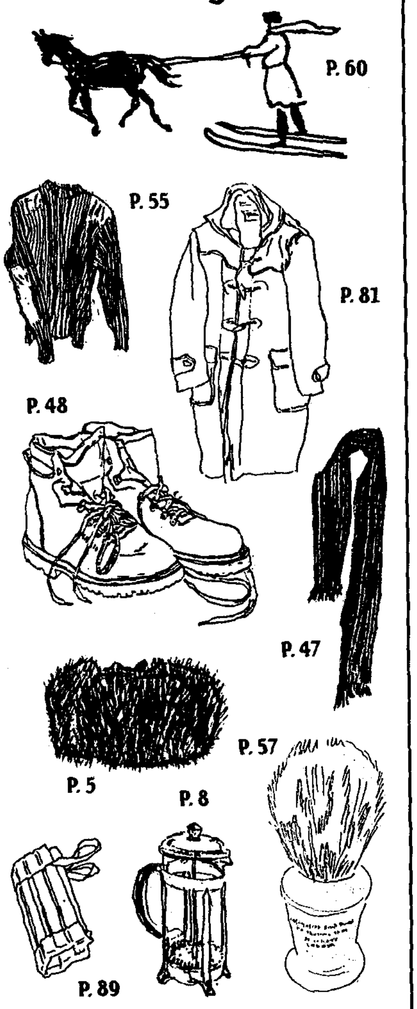

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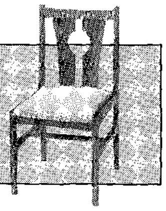

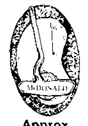

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in three hundred and forty. (True, a total of eight hundred cases in three decades isn't terribly impressive; two and a half times as many people are murdered in New York City in a year. But in any other population the size and age distribution of Guam's about twenty cases of ALS would occur, not four hundred and sixty.) Around the time that the N.I.H. lab finally shut its doors, Jacob Brody, formerly the lab's director, captured the sense of fruitless intellectual yearning when he wrote, in a largely scientific article, "What can be sadder than an epidemiologist investigating a disease that has no pattern?"

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Goose down on the warm curve of a pail.
Hundreds of young rooks flying into the tree.
John: *I'd like to get good at it, at being married.*
Me: *Well, you can't do better than that.*
John: *She thinks I can do much better than talk about wanting!*
I said to her, I know I haven't done well
these last two years, these first few years,
but I want to get good at it. I'm good at being alone.

A.'s jealousy. B.'s jealousy. Of life.
All night I sucked at wisdom like a shooting tooth:
this morning life's a light garment, a garment of light,
like in our paradise. A. keeps the manger, B. keeps it, too, forever
and ever. This gravy is wide and deep, saltier and stranger.
I've carried it home to you under my white hat.

—JEAN VALENTINE

• •

ALUMINUM is often associated with dementia, but whether or not it plays a role in the disease on Guam remains an open question; Daniel P. Perl, a neuropathologist at the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, in Manhattan, hopes to answer it. Perl, in his late forties, has dark hair, a mustache sprinkled with gray, and a "Know what I mean?" delivery right out of Queens, where he was born. A professor of psychiatry and pathology, he is a leading authority on Alzheimer's disease. He became interested in Guam, he told me one afternoon in New York, after "the pots-and-pans thing."

It was a study by Perl and his colleagues in the late seventies that, perhaps more than anything else, prompted Americans to worry that eating food prepared in aluminum cookware might lead to Alzheimer's disease. Working at the University of Vermont, the scientists aimed an X-ray probe at brain tissue taken from some people who had died of Alzheimer's; the nerve cells had abnormally high levels of aluminum. The scientists couldn't explain the finding. They didn't say that aluminum *caused* the Alzheimer's—only that a lot of the metal was present in the diseased, tangle-filled nerve cells of the few specimens they tested.

Still, not long after they published their observations, in *Science*, in 1980, the aluminum scare was on, spread mainly by some apocalyptic news reports. Perl himself thinks that Americans should *not* worry about aluminum cookware. The aluminum that most of us encounter every day appears to pose no threat, he said. Aluminum is the third-most-abundant element on earth, and we're all exposed to it all the time, in soil, dust, food. Antacids such as Maalox contain aluminum hydroxides. Perl said of our considerable daily intake of garden-variety aluminum, "If you've got normal kidneys, you pee it right out." In spite of serious doubts about the role of aluminum in Alzheimer's, a nagging fear of aluminum products persists. See Perl quoted and pictured in *Newsweek;* he's got a pickled brain in his hands and a "Go figure" expression on his face. When the press calls him, he issues a standard line: "Take the bargain on aluminum cookware, and tell your congressman to get more money for Alzheimer's research."

Perl does believe that other aluminum compounds—other species of the metal—may have the potential to get into the brain and damage nerve cells. When aluminum chlorohydrate, an ingredient of antiperspirants, is in spray form, Perl said, it's a kind of aluminum that a person might want to avoid using, since studies in his lab reveal that the brain absorbs aluminum directly from the nasal passages. But the fact is that no one has identified the source of the aluminum that accumulates in the brains of Alzheimer's victims, so the risk involved in exposure to aluminum compounds is uncertain. "What do we really know about aluminum speciation?" Perl asks. "Damned little."

The place to settle the aluminum question, in Perl's view, is Guam. Several years ago, after hearing about the dementia and ALS on Guam, Perl X-ray-probed some diseased brain tissue from the island, which he had obtained from Gajdusek's group, and found that the aluminum in those brains was nearly off the scale. "Normally, the background level of aluminum in a neuron is from one to three parts per million," he told me. "In the diseased Guam brains we're getting from three hundred to six hundred parts per million. That's a remarkable figure. It's as if there were *chunks* of aluminum in those neurons. Our hypothesis is that the aluminum is playing an active role in the disease. We're not going to say what that role is. We don't know. Somewhere along the line, you're going to have to explain what all this aluminum is doing in these brains. That's going to have to be part of this equation. Yeah, you *can* say the aluminum is secondary, it's down the road from an already damaged brain, and all that. Yes, the evidence is circumstantial, but every time you see this abnormality—the tangles in Alzheimer's, the tangles on Guam—it's this one element, it's aluminum. It's not all elements. It's not other elements with it. It's aluminum. What the hell's going on? Why should it be that specific? Why should this one element go to this one place in the middle of the brain? I don't really know. The disease on Guam may be caused by a combination of things. It is certainly not simple exposure to aluminum in the soil—I could name fifty places all over the world that have aluminum-rich soil. The answer may be that it's two things on Guam that come together—cycad and aluminum, or some kind of thing—and that if you had cycad alone it wouldn't do it, if you had aluminum alone it wouldn't do it. Who knows?

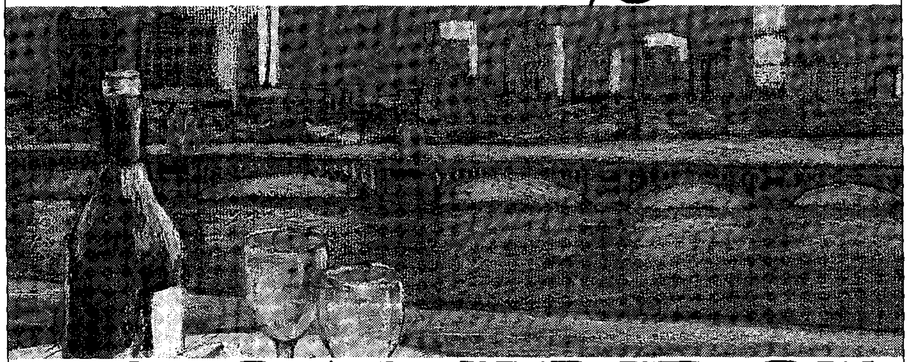
But maybe that's why the answer doesn't stare us in the face."

SOME recent studies suggest that the answer *has* been staring scientists in the face all along. A neurotoxicologist named Peter S. Spencer is now reviving the cycad hypothesis, much to Kurland's satisfaction. After looking at all the earlier data with a fresh eye and adding some findings of his own, Spencer has concluded that "the weight of evidence" supports the cycad seed as a cause of the disease on Guam. Like most scientists who have approached the epidemic, Spencer, who was reared and educated in England and is now a professor at the Oregon Health Sciences University, in Portland, sees Guam as a test case for a larger idea: he believes that natural substances in food are being overlooked in the search for the origins of neurodegenerative disorders.

Spencer was introduced to Kurland at a scientific meeting in Washington, D.C., a decade ago. I picture them talking in a hallway outside some fluorescent-lit conference room, an encounter of opposite styles: Kurland, the smaller man, a senior scientist, mocked for his folly, adhering to the cycad hypothesis, awaiting vindication but unable, as a clinician and population watcher, to test directly the question of causality; Spencer, then in his early thirties, six feet four, edgy, quick-talking, an experimentalist uniquely qualified to try out the cycad hypothesis in the lab. They showed more than a polite collegial interest in each other's work. Kurland had once predicted that "there might be an analogy" between ALS on Guam and lathyrism, a paralytic disorder endemic to parts of Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and India. Spencer had lately been studying lathyrism, in the lab and abroad, and to him the basic similarity of lathyrism and Guamanian ALS was obvious: lathyrism afflicts poor rural people who have consumed excessive amounts of a toxic seedstuff during periods of hardship and famine.

Doctors since Hippocrates have known that eating too much *Lathyrus sativus*, or grass pea, causes an irreversible paralysis. Not until a few years ago, however, following some earlier leads of Indian and British scientists, did Spencer and his co-workers actually demonstrate which compound in the grass pea destroyed nerves. The grass-

SO TRANQUIL



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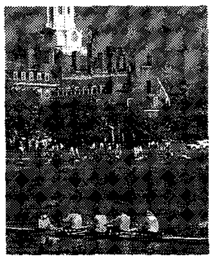

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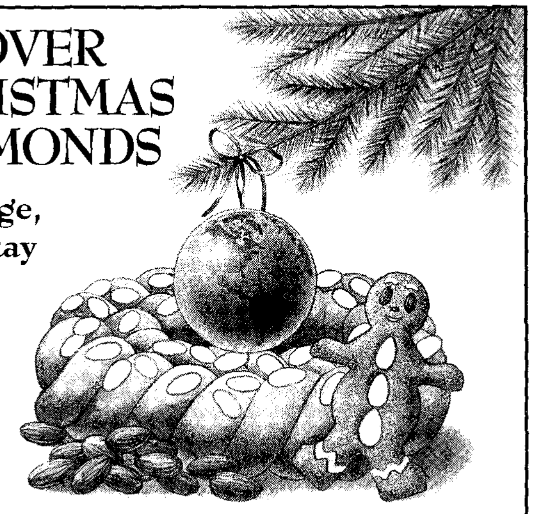

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pea neurotoxin, they showed, is beta-N-oxalylamino-L-alanine, or BOAA, another amino acid. Amino acids are the building blocks of protein, the pearls on the string. But besides performing that structural function, certain amino acids modulate the nervous system, carrying chemical messages across the infinitesimal synapses between nerve cells. The brain is awash in its own stock of amino acids, which either calm or excite impulses. In addition, foods contain amino acids that seem able to affect brain chemistry, and thus one's mood, if not one's health: the tryptophan in milk makes it a good nightcap; the glutamate in MSG and the aspartate in NutraSweet are said to give some people headaches. Spencer's group, in its studies of the BOAA from grass pea, showed that this amino acid stimulated nerves so potently that they literally burned themselves out. When his group fed macaque monkeys large amounts of the grass-pea neurotoxin, or of grass pea itself, the animals showed the initial signs of lathyrism: they became weak and stiff-legged. Significantly, though, they did not develop full-blown paralysis, regardless of how much of the grass pea or its neurotoxin they received. "It is a bitch to produce lathyrism in animals," Spencer said. "You can't produce it in rats or mice at all. Scientists in India and elsewhere have been trying to do that for a long time, and they've failed. I don't know why. In our experiments on monkeys we were able to produce only the very early, reversible stage of the disease. So it's a real problem, producing animal models of disease brought on by excitatory amino acids."

Spencer's studies of the grass pea laid the foundation for his work on the BMAA in cycad seeds, which has a chemical structure (and thus a name) similar to that of the grass-pea neurotoxin. It was BMAA that the biochemists at King's College discovered in the sixties, injected in chicks with such bizarre effect, and then gave up on. Spencer contacted Peter Nunn in London, and the two of them picked it up. When they added pure BMAA to a culture of mouse-brain tissue—the fetal brains had been removed, sectioned, and kept in a warm, serumlike buffer for a few weeks while the nerves kept developing—the BMAA prompted weak but undeniable excitatory responses.

In 1986, while Spencer was the director of the Institute of Neurotoxicology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, he led a team of seven scientists in a study that was published in *Science*, which gave the story big play by putting it on the cover. In the study the scientists tube-fed large doses of BMAA to thirteen macaques every day for as much as thirteen weeks. The animals were videotaped. Wrinkled hands and a curved posture and seemingly grizzled faces make macaques, like primates generally, look old even when they're young; these animals appeared to age before one's eyes. After a few weeks of exposure to BMAA, some of them became weak. The muscles of their arms lost bulk. They couldn't pick up small objects anymore. These initial symptoms, Spencer has said, were not unlike those of someone in the early stages of ALS. Over the three months, some of the animals became apathetic, listless. They stopped grooming themselves. Their hands trembled. Their faces slackened. They stared. They stooped and shuffled. Watching the videotapes, even those scientists who disagreed with Spencer were struck by how the animals now seemed to have a mild case of parkinsonism.

Two of the afflicted monkeys received the drug L-dopa, a treatment for Parkinson's; within thirty minutes, the animals appeared more alert and expressive, and had regained some use of their hands. Several of the experimental animals were anesthetized and put to death and quickly autopsied. In their brains were signs of degenerative changes, such as swelling and discoloration of some neurons. The degeneration was particularly evident in the motor cortex, where movements are initiated, and where in ALS victims the damage is usually extensive. There was also some damage to the spinal cord, and even to the substantia nigra, the target of Parkinson's disease.

But this experiment does not "prove" the hypothesis, as Spencer points out. The brains of the experimental animals that were fed BMAA did not have in detail the advanced pathology of ALS or parkinsonism-dementia; there were no neurofibrillary tangles in their neurons, for one thing. Nor were the sick animals' symptoms precisely those of human beings with those diseases. Spencer, building in a few escape hatches, says only that the experimental animals exhibited "some features" that were "reminiscent" of the disease on Guam.

A macaque confined to a cage in a lab in New York and fed BMAA is, as analogies go, fairly remote from a Chamorro boy hiding in the forest who eats *fadang* and develops ALS a few years later, but that is the closest anyone has come to getting the disease on Guam to occur in a laboratory setting. Spencer wonders how close science will ever come to reducing the disease to barren fundamentals, given its close association with hard times. Malnourishment, he suggests, enhances the susceptibility of humans to cycad-seed toxins. "But that idea is going to be impossible to test," he said. "We cannot in good conscience raise experimental animals in such a way as to starve them."

How a single toxin might give rise to such a variety of symptoms and pathology as is expressed in ALS and parkinsonism-dementia is a matter of speculation. Spencer suggests that a person's age and metabolism and the amount of toxin consumed influence the form that the disease ultimately takes. A poorly fed adolescent who receives a high dose of cycad-seed toxin, or whose body handles the toxin poorly, might be destined for ALS in months or years. A middle-aged person who has received somewhat less toxin might end up with parkinsonism-dementia in years or decades. Even less toxin in an older person might eventually lead to dementia minus the parkinsonism—to something resembling Alzheimer's disease.

The disease on Guam can take a great deal of time to develop, and that delay confounds researchers. "Cases of ALS have been known to occur among Guamanians as long as 13 and possibly 34 years after leaving Guam," Dwayne M. Reed, an epidemiologist working at the Research Center in the sixties and seventies, and Jacob Brody wrote in 1975 in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*. "Exposure to something in the traditional way of life, involving either a cumulative effect, or more likely, a long latent period" could account

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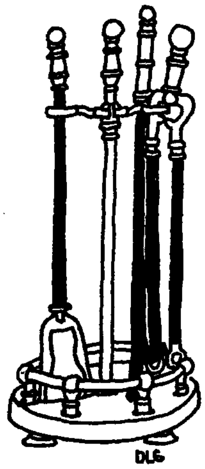
for the delay, they continued. On Guam, then, years and even decades may intervene between action and reaction. It might be called a non-Newtonian disease, crying out for an idea as counterintuitive as the quantum. And so Spencer has introduced the idea of the slow toxin.

The amino acid BMAA, he says, may be a slow toxin, even though in the lab setting at high doses it seems to work acutely. BMAA itself is probably not the whole story, Spencer adds. He is even more concerned now about cycasin, the potent cycad-seed chemical that seems to be doubly dangerous, capable of triggering both tumors in rodents and neuromuscular disease in goats. And cycasin, unlike BMAA, is abundant in a cycad seed, making up from two to four per cent of its weight. If the culpable agent is ingested in a meal of *fadang* or absorbed into the bloodstream from a topical medicine made of unprocessed cycad seeds, Spencer says, it may damage nerve cells in a manner that doesn't show up for quite a while.

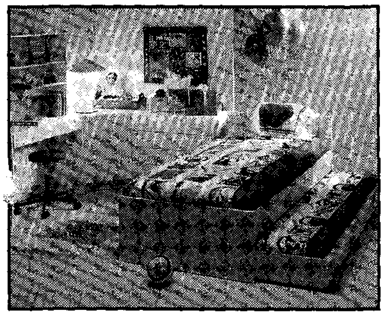
Assuming that such a thing as a slow toxin exists, there are a couple of ways it might work. It might kill off a small fraction of the neurons in the substantia nigra, say, but not give rise to parkinsonism until neighboring neurons have died of old age. (Starting in our mid-forties, about ten per cent of our brain neurons die off per decade.) Only with aging, then, would the loss of the killed-off neurons be felt. (In forwarding this concept, Spencer elaborates on the work of the neurologists William Langston and Donald Calne.) If one thinks of a dose of neurotoxin as a blinding punch, the toxin-plus-time theory is analogous to what happens to some boxers long after they step out of the ring: traumatized young, they don't tremble and falter with parkinsonism until the years, too, have exacted a price.



Or a slow toxin, Spencer says, may work like a carcinogen, wreaking cellular havoc by fouling up the genetic material, DNA. The odd thing about mature nerve cells is that (except for olfactory-nerve cells, which regenerate one by one every month or so) they don't just keep dividing, like other cells. Not long after birth, the majority of the nerve cells stop dividing. Since they don't divide, adult nerve cells are incapable of growing wildly into tumors. In Spencer's view, a nerve cell exposed to a tumor-promoting chemical such as cycasin might react in some unfortunate way other than by transforming into a tumor. Perhaps its DNA processing is altered, so that the cell slowly degenerates and dies. Thus, Spencer says, cycasin may be a "neurotoxin masquerading as a carcinogen"—a slow toxin.

"Maybe there is a link between cancer and neurological disease which no one has ever thought about before," he told me. "No one has asked, 'What happens to a nondividing nerve cell exposed to a carcinogen? What the hell does it do?' Maybe it starts making foreign proteins, or something. So we're looking for a mechanism of that sort, something that might take years and years for a nerve cell to express. There's got to be something like that. That's where we're going."

Spencer will travel some distance to make a point. After he did the BMAA study, he felt that it was crucial to determine whether cycad seeds played a role in the clusters of ALS and parkinsonism-dementia outside Guam. In the fall of 1987, he went to Irian Jaya. He hired a boat, two local health workers, a guide, and a guard with a machine gun, and, with a colleague, Valerie Palmer, who is the head of the Third World Medical Research Foundation, he steamed up the Ia River, retracing some of Gajdusek's movements. In Auyu villages, Spencer and Palmer interviewed two men with ALS and three with parkinsonism. They showed them photographs and seeds of cycad trees, and asked, "Any of these around?" They were led some distance from the river ("No wonder Gajdusek missed it," Spencer said), to a small stand of cycads. It was the local pharmacy. An Auyu man explained that the seeds were used to treat warts, open sores, abrasions. A poultice was made by mixing fresh crushed pith of the seeds with their own milky juice, he said, and applying the sodden material to the damaged skin, with a leaf as a bandage. The poultice would be freshened daily over days or weeks. They interviewed a twenty-



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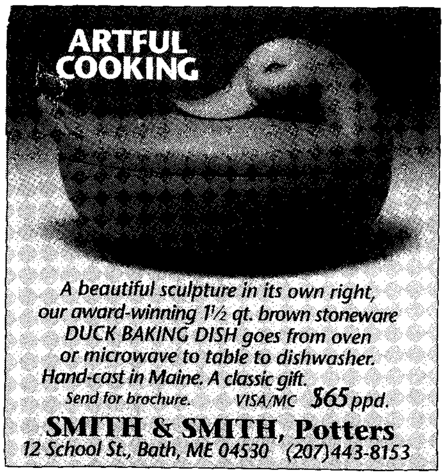

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nine-year-old man who was in the early stages of ALS. When he was fifteen, the man said, he had used fresh poultices for a month to treat a sore on one ankle. He showed Spencer the scar. The man's mother had taught him the remedy; she, too, had been paralyzed.

"It was an incredible revelation, a fantastic moment," Spencer said.

I said that it must have been exciting to stumble on such a thing.

"But it wasn't stumbling—don't you see?"

From Irian Jaya, he went, with a few colleagues, to Japan, where he sought another link between ALS and cycads. He recounted his "witch-doctor bit" for me one afternoon in his lab at Einstein, while we were standing next to an enormous top-opening deep freeze. In a village on the Kii Peninsula, he had visited the shop of a *kitoshi*, or dispenser of traditional medicine. "She was about ninety-nine years old," he recalled. "Her son was there, too. He was about seventy-five. She said, 'Come on, come on, what's your problem?' " Spencer, towering, with a British accent, did a comical imitation of the wizened *kitoshi*. "I said I had very bad diarrhea, and the translator told her. She said, 'No problem a-tall, I'll pray for you.' She walked me up to the quote-unquote altar. She banged on a drum, she muttered some things. She patted me on the shoulder with a piece of wood. She waved a knife around and muttered some more. Then she issued my prescriptions. The first was for some herbal. The second was for another herbal." He opened the freezer, and, as he reached in, a cloud of condensed air rose up and around him, a sorcerer over a steaming brew. "The third was for cycads." He handed over a plastic bag that had a Japanese label and contained what looked like peeled chestnuts. "I went around the corner to the equivalent of a drugstore to fill the prescription. I asked the man there how many I should take. He said to take as many as I liked."

On another trip to the Kii Peninsula, Spencer went to Iseji, the village that was the epicenter of the disease, where he saw in yards and public gardens a great many *sotetsu*, or *Cycas revoluta* trees, heavy with toxic seeds. He interviewed a woman whose daughter had died some years before, at twenty-five, of ALS. He and his co-expeditionists

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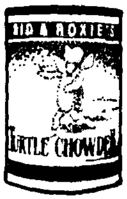

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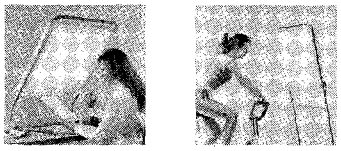

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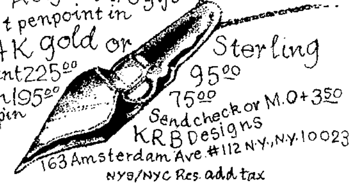

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summarized the case in a letter to the British journal *The Lancet:*

> Her mother told how the child every year from the age of 1 to 12 had received a basket of young *sotetsu* seeds collected by her grandmother from cycad trees. They were used as marbles, to form necklaces, or fashioned into whistles for use by the young child. The mother agreed that repeated oral contact with the neurotoxic pulp of the seed probably took place during the first years of her child's life. The child walked before the age of 1 and had no unusual childhood illnesses. She developed into a healthy teenager and did well in long-distance running races until, at the age of 18, she began to complain of backache and spasm of the calf muscles. At age 20, she was said to have leg weakness . . . and ALS was diagnosed. The disease appears to be less common in Iseji today, and children no longer play with *sotetsu* seed.

As far as Spencer was concerned, there was now enough evidence to sound a warning on Guam. He held a press conference on the island in the spring of 1988, at which he urged Guamanians not to eat cycad-derived foods, and called for an outright ban on medicines that made use of fresh unprocessed cycad seeds. Remarkably, not since Governor de la Corte's 1856 decree had anyone officially advised Guamanians to avoid cycad seeds.

But his public-health warning, like de la Corte's, was not all that effective. His critics accused him of showboating. Kurland, who has mixed feelings about having once restrained himself from making a similar public-health recommendation, who credits Spencer with reviving scientific interest in Guam, and who remains convinced that cycad seeds are at the root of the epidemic, nonetheless believes, in his conservative way, that Spencer went too far—overstepped the evidence. An editorial in Guam's paper, the *Pacific Daily News*, shared Spencer's concern but seemed annoyed by his tone: "We're not sure a formal ban is necessary. The Chamorro people are not stupid. They are now well aware of the link between the fadang and lytico-bodig. We're certain that any local people who can read or hear have now been informed on the connection."

On Guam, the reluctance to follow Spencer's recommendation runs deep, as I gathered during a conversation with Governor Joseph Ada. The Governor, a cheerful man with aquiline good looks like Danny Thomas's, has a gift for irony. In his office, in the pride of place behind his desk, hangs a large, sunny painting that depicts a friendly seaside exchange between Magellan's beplumed landing party and several naked Chamorros. Yet one of the Governor's first official acts, he told me, was to thank the Philippine government for the favor its people did Guam in killing Magellan. The Governor's policy toward *fadang* is similarly ambiguous. His first reaction to Spencer's recommendations was "There goes my favorite food!" Officially, he said, he was anti-*fadang*. But then he said, smiling, that he continues to enjoy it. When he goes to fiestas, Chamorro women stack *fadang* tortillas on his plate, and he doesn't want to disappoint them. "If I see it, I eat it," he said. He told me that he was personally not much concerned about safety, because the people who cook for him know how to detoxify cycad seeds. I lost some confidence in his biomedical judgment when, as he graciously led me out of his office, he handed me, as a memento of my visit, a cigarette lighter with his name on it.

Steele was another authority sending mixed *fadang* signals. For a while, he collaborated eagerly with Spencer, championing the cycad theory. He even publicized the cases of a Saipanese mother and son—she had parkinsonism and he had ALS—who had eaten *fadang* only once, years before they were stricken; they remembered the occasion because the mother had never prepared *fadang*, and it had tasted horrible. Steele had concluded from this case study that it was not impossible for a person to develop ALS a long time after one meal of improperly prepared *fadang*. (On the basis of that case study, I decided that I wasn't going to try *fadang* even once.)

Then, a year after Spencer's announcement, Steele declared a change of heart. The occasion was a symposium of the Guam Lytico and Bodig Association, which consists of patients, their families, doctors, and volunteers. The symposium took place during my stay on Guam, and I was sitting next to Cynthia J. Torres, a founder of the association. Addressing about a hundred people in a banquet room of the Guam Hilton, Steele said, "A number of people have been unable to reproduce Spencer's animal studies," and, he went on to say, "We doubt that it's the

BMAA of the cycad seeds accounting for this, but there could be yet another toxin in the cycad seed that we've not identified yet."

Mrs. Torres turned to me, and, summing up the current Guamanian view of medical authority, said to me in a stage whisper, "*Scientists!*"

During a question-and-answer period, a gray-haired, bespectacled woman wearing a blue Hawaiian shirt went to the front of the room, took the microphone, spoke in lilting Chamorro, and had most of the audience in stitches. The woman, Mrs. Torres told me, was saying that scientists always blame the disease on *fadang* because people ate *fadang* during and right after the war. Her theory was a little different. She said that the strange thing that Chamorros first ate back then, an equally likely cause of disease, was Spam. She called for more research.

Mrs. Torres and I caught up with the woman and a friend of hers after the symposium, on their way out the door. The woman was Rosario Santos, who is in her mid-seventies and is the mother of twelve. She stood broomstick straight, with her arms folded across her chest. She looked exceptionally fit. Her English is Chamorro-accented—high-pitched, singsongy, buoyant. I asked her if she still ate *fadang*.

"Myself, I'm not scared. I know how to do it," she replied.

Mrs. Santos's companion said, "I don't think that *fadang* is causing the *bodig*. My parents are raised up on *fadang*, my grandfather, my father. Up to these days, I am still eating the *fadang*."

Mrs. Santos said, "The younger generation, they don't want *fadang*. A friend said to me, 'If the answer is *fadang*, it is a disgrace to my people.' I said, 'Carry your head high. It is not our fault. The disease is with us, and the *fadang* is not the only reason.' " She made the sign of the Cross, and said goodbye.

Later on, Steele told me he had lost faith in the latest cycad studies mainly because he thought Spencer wasn't acknowledging the fact that raw cycad seeds contain very little BMAA, and processed *fadang* has practically none.

"Oh, sorry. It wouldn't have happened if I weren't with persons larger than life."

Whatever Steele's reasons, his public reversal that day was curious. Aspects of the cycad hypothesis are eminently criticizable. Nevertheless, even though it's remotely possible that cycad seeds play no role in the disease, even though someone might prepare a toxin-free batch of *fadang*, even though not everyone who eats *fadang* comes down with the disease, and even though some people who have come down with the disease say they have never eaten *fadang*, clearly the prudent thing is to avoid the stuff. That some Guamanians should cherish *fadang* as an expression of their native culture is understandable. Still, the failure of researchers to state unambiguously the dangers of doing so seems scandalous. If Perrier pulls every one of its bottles off the shelf because of a trace of benzene found in some samples—that is, because of the *perception* of a *possible* threat—how odd that doctors should hesitate to discourage Guamanians from using as a food and medicine something that, as was said more than a century ago, "cannot fail to do them injury."

EARLY one night, I attended a village meeting in Umatac. It was held outdoors, on a concrete apron adjacent to the commissioner's office. The air felt warm and humid. About two dozen of us sat in folding chairs or on a set of metal bleachers. A young girl passed around paper cups of corn soup. Albert Topasna, then the Commissioner of Umatac (he is now the mayor), presided at a standup microphone. With perfect ceremony and courtesy, he introduced the speakers and fielded questions. The meeting went on for three hours. A policeman talked for a long time about teenage rowdiness, underage moped drivers, and speeding by customized-low-rider pickup trucks. A government official spoke about land claims—an extremely complicated and very important subject. The Commissioner was reassuring, and he always addressed the audience as "my people." A few times he said, "Don't worry, be happy."

Topasna—everyone calls him Chief—had been the Commissioner of Umatac for most of the previous twenty years. As a matter of policy, he never drinks or plays cards in public, and never goes to illegal cockfights. "If people are drinking and I am drinking, who is going to take care of them?" he explained. One morning, at a village gathering outside his office, he sat enthroned on a folding chair, and when some young girls arrived they first went over and kissed his hand. "This is the closest community on the island," he told me. "I know everybody's problems

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from top to bottom. We are all very close."

Topasna has broad shoulders, a royal midsection, deep-set eyes, and a flattop haircut. He is partial to Hawaiian shirts, worn with a triangle of undershirt showing at the neck. He is widely acknowledged to be the island's greatest diver and fisherman. He takes to the water many Thursday nights, having been sent out by his wife for Friday's supper. He speaks English as melodically as he speaks Chamorro, his first language. His voice is bassoonlike, deep and reedy—so beautiful that I asked him to recite for me some of the village song. He said:

In our dear old southern home,
Situated right by the sea,
Where the brave Magellan landed
When he crossed the silent sea,
In our dear old Umatac by the sea.

In our dear old southern home,
Situated right by the sea,
Where the oldest Spanish forts
And the capital used to be,
In our dear old Umatac by the sea.

Our conversations took on a pattern. I would ask about village life in general and then uneasily get around to the subject of the disease, the doctors, and *fadang*. My last day on the island, I found Topasna in his office. It was early morning. Dew moistened the grass; plumeria sweetened the air. We sat in a windowless room, the air-conditioner thrumming away. We talked about fishing. For a few days each spring, snappers chase schools of mackerel into Umatac Bay. With Topasna leading the catch, dozens of people wade into the water and drag enormous nets toward the shore—"scooping the mackerel," he says, with a gleeful look. Once, they hauled in twenty-six tons in three days. We talked about the latest Magellan controversy. Two University of Guam professors have rereckoned Magellan's landing, and concluded that it wasn't in Umatac but farther north, maybe in Tumon Bay. "Can the historians prove he didn't land here?" Topasna asked. "What is wrong with them? Are they young? Why don't they come down here and get the input? 'I'm sorry, Mr. Professor. My golly, sir, I think you are the one who is causing the trouble. Now that you're at the University of Guam, you're going to turn everything around. Mr. Professor, sir, you're telling us we're celebrating nothing?' " He then hinted that if the scholars did show their faces in Umatac they might run into some rigorous peer review.

Like the Governor, Topasna is known for his appetite for *fadang*. "I ate it ever since I was born," he said. "I'm still eating it. I love it. It is all over the jungle. You barbecue the fish and eat them with the *fadang* tortillas." He pretended to roll a fish in a tortilla, and smiled broadly at the thought of this delight. Of the disease he said, "It is really bad. Not only here but in the other villages, too. We have to make the people understand that the reason the doctors keep coming back is that they are not through yet. It is a problem that reaches my heart. When I speak to groups about it, and I speak in Chamorro, I look out into the crowd and everybody is crying."

I asked him if his family had been touched by the disease.

He shifted in his chair, leaned forward, folded his big arms on his desk. "For the *lytico* and *bodig*, not that I know on my mother's side. I am too young when my father's brother died, but I think he was part of that. I know that some of my father's side had it. I don't know too much about my father. I was only eight years old when he was killed by the Japanese. So I don't know whether he was going to have *lytico* and *bodig*. But I know that some of my uncles had this. I'm not denying anything. There is only one who is giving out this disease, and that's the One up there."

I turned the tape recorder off, thinking he had finished. He kept talking, and now his eyes grew teary. "I don't know," he said. "Maybe I will get it, too. Maybe someday you'll come back and I'll be sitting here with my head down." He rested his chin on his chest. "I don't know. My children, I don't know if they will get it. It is up to—" He looked skyward. "My godfather was a strong man who was six feet tall. He got the disease, *bodig* or whatever. When he died, he was like this"—said Topasna measured out a yard.

THE Guam problem stays with scientists long after they have left the island. "There's like a club of people hooked on this thing," Daniel Perl said a while ago, "and everybody's waiting to see how it turns out." Dwayne M. Reed sees the plusses of the cycad hypothesis but still considers the question open; when I telephoned him at his office in Honolulu and mentioned

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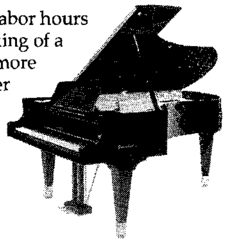
the word "Guam," he said, "*Argh!* The bane of my existence! I've been racking my brain on that for thirty years! Over and over and over! All these wonderful clues—the answer is there somewhere." D. Carleton Gajdusek, who says that "the cycad boys" don't have the answer this time, either, and supports the mineral-imbalance theory but admits that it's not a sure thing, said, "We jumped on Guam—we had to—and we've learned a tremendous amount, but it didn't yield the answers we were looking for. ALS on Guam has decreased to a fiftieth or a hundredth of what it was. The phenomenon eluded us before we could figure it out. It's unfortunate—not from the Guamanians' point of view, of course, but from ours." Marjorie Grant Whiting has been waiting, like a captain's wife pacing a widow's walk, for substantiation of the idea she launched thirty-five years ago—the cycad hypothesis. She lives in Honolulu now, and when I visited her there one day she was wearing a floral muumuu, Clark Kent glasses, a necklace made from the eggshell of a Kalahari ostrich, and Birkenstock sandals. She walked with a cane, her hair was white, and she roared with laughter every time she detected one of several attempts I made to learn her age. In a corner of a friend's disused lab at the University of Hawaii she had an office that consisted of a metal desk piled high with papers next to a chemical-fume hood filled with papers. Her book "Neurotoxicity of Cycads: An Annotated Bibliography for the Years 1829-1989," a collecting labor of decades, was published in April of this year. "I'd like to see this thing put to bed in my lifetime," she said. "We've certainly taken a firm enough stand on it."

Shortly after I got back from Guam, I met Spencer for brunch at a restaurant near LaGuardia Airport (he was between flights). In a double-breasted navy blazer and gray slacks, he looked the part of the British voyager-scientist. When we joined the buffet line, he helped himself to eggs Benedict and beef sausage; impressed by this toxicologist's dietary abandon, I did the same. He said no to champagne and coffee. I mentioned that I'd spoken with many Guamanians who not only didn't believe in the cycad theory but blithely, even ecstatically, ate *fadang.*

He said, "There are some suggestions of cows' becoming addicted to



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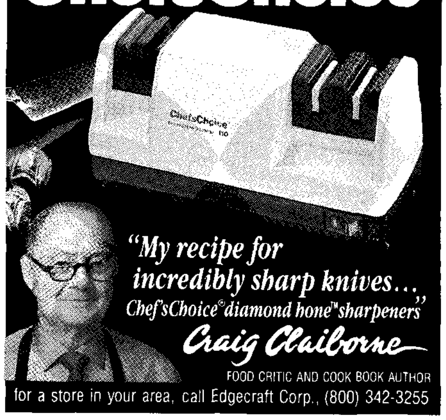

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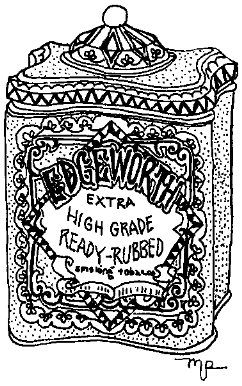
cycads, of course. And some of our studies suggested that BMAA, and maybe other agents in the cycad kernel, interact with virtually the same receptor sites on neurons that PCP does—and PCP, as you know, is highly addictive."

I told him that some of the Guamanians I'd spoken with—like Greg Quinata, the Umatac cynic—said they found the cycad theory hard to believe, because not everyone who had eaten *fadang* got ALS or parkinsonism-dementia.



"Well," Spencer said, with a here-we-go-again roll of his eyes, "that's rather how people used to think about smoking and lung cancer, isn't it? And it's the way people think about lathyrism: 'How can this food that keeps me alive be poisonous?' " Concerning Greg's other comment—that most people in the world who get ALS have never touched a cycad—Spencer said something like "Yes, well, that's the great task ahead, isn't it? To determine whether dietary or occupational or environmental chemicals play a role in triggering some form of ALS."

As a result of Spencer's work on the excitatory amino acid BMAA, researchers in several labs have begun work on the substance, and others are screening other plants for similar neurotoxins that may function the way the ancient cycad's poisons seem to do—as a defense, as an explicit chemical stop signal. "There's no reason to believe that plants have evolved for our benefit," Spencer said. "We're at a very primitive level of understanding what kinds of foods are good for us and bad for us. Certainly the general notion that what's 'natural' is good and what's 'synthetic' is bad is totally without rational scientific basis. I think that additional factors have to be considered in the origination of the disease on Guam, such as other factors in the environment there, and other compounds in the cycad seed besides BMAA. We might think of the cycad as a chemical factory producing a large number of agents that have neurotoxic potential. But I'm very, very strongly convinced that the cycad seed will prove to be an important trigger of the disease."

Science is by nature and virtue unpredictable, so anything could happen, but it is not obvious how scientists are going to crack this code, how they'll squeeze the broad context of the Guam disease into a test tube, given that its origins seem to be tied in with historical and cultural as well as physical forces: with centuries of oppression, with war, with crop-destroying winds, with family likes and dislikes, with ethnic pride and even resentment. Guamanian ALS and parkinsonism-dementia have an irreducible quality, like an unknown that is combusted in the crucible and leaves a mysterious ash. The brain, longing to know, has never had much luck comprehending what it endures.

Kurland won't quit, and speaks now of Guam with the urgency of a man given a last shot. Nearly forty years after he first went to the island, no longer a young researcher with a reputation to make but a white-haired veteran with every license to putter around a vacation trailer he keeps on the banks of the Mississippi River, he'll be going back to Guam occasionally. Recently, the National Institute on Aging approved a five-million-dollar grant that Kurland had applied for along with Perl, with a proposal titled "Epidemiology of Neurodegenerative Disorders in Micronesia." The money essentially reëstablishes a research station on Guam. Kurland will run the project, as he ran the first one, but this time mostly from Rochester. In New York, Perl will seek tangles and senile plaques and aluminum in brain tissue sent from the island by air courier. On Guam, Steele, among others, will help keep track of patients, and David Williams, who studied with Kurland, will head the village research—doing what his teacher calls shoe-leather epidemiology.

Contrary to some reports, the epidemic on Guam has not ended but only shifted, Kurland told me on the phone the other day. The most recent survey of Umatac and another village (the survey results were analyzed after my trip to Guam) shows that ALS has fallen somewhat but that parkinsonism-dementia may well be as common as ever and—what is most significant—that an extraordinary number of those surveyed have symptoms of dementia without the parkinsonism. Perl says the disease closely resembles Alzheimer's.

Kurland, ever restrained, doesn't leap to any conclusion. "We're calling it Marianas dementia, because we don't know if it's Alzheimer's or not," he said. "We haven't done enough pathology yet. But we are seeing in those southern villages a rate of dementia that is generally four times as high as what we see here in Rochester. About forty per cent of the people over seventy that we surveyed were demented. We also saw signs of dementia in ten per cent of those between fifty and sixty. These are unprecedented findings. The epidemic seems to be changing course. It appears as though some people who survived the period in their lives when they were most vulnerable to ALS or parkinsonism-dementia are developing dementia alone. It could be a dose-response thing." He was referring to Spencer's theory that people who have been exposed to small amounts of cycad-seed toxins over a long period are perhaps prone to dementia alone, as opposed to ALS or parkinsonism-dementia. "The cause has not been established, although I personally still think that the cycad seed is the most likely explanation," Kurland added.

I asked if he believed that the dementia there was linked to the continued eating or medicinal use of cycad-seed products.

He said he could not rule that out. "There is the aluminum question, but we don't know whether that's a cause of the disease or an effect," he went on. "Maybe it's a combination of things. I favor the cycad hypothesis, but I don't care whether it's aluminum or cycad, as long as we get the answer. Understand, if a toxin were found to produce features of three neurodegenerative diseases that we've always regarded as distinct—ALS, parkinsonism, and dementia—it would have tremendous repercussions for neurology. My own view is that on Guam, anyway, these are all caused by the same thing." He paused. "I think it's an emergency. What is happening on Guam is very strange." —TERENCE MONMANEY

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Noises On

"MACHINAL," at the Public, is a revival of a 1928 expressionist play, by Sophie Treadwell, about a young stenographer who feels stifled and oppressed by all the circumstances of her life. She yields to the urging of her mother—a coarse creature who gobbles her bread, and may even wipe her plate with it—and agrees to marry her fat boss, repulsive though she finds him. Eventually, she takes a lover, and then she kills her husband by smashing his head with a bottle filled with stones. Under the obtrusive direction of Michael Greif, the production is expressionist to its eyeballs; scene follows scene amid flashing lights and crashing sound effects, so it's a wonder that the story seeps through at all. Not that it would matter much if it didn't, for the story is where the trouble lies: the script is earnest and humorless and deeply condescending toward working people and toward its heroine as victim. (In this instance, audience as victim, too; Sophie Treadwell may have felt downtrodden, but *we* didn't step on her.) The point of view expressed in the title was a standard left-wing cliché until, seven years later, Clifford Odets' "Awake and Sing!" broke the mold of "social protest" and cleared the air.

The blinding, pounding performance at the Public could be used as an argument against director's theatre forever; nevertheless, the play is acted better than it deserves to be. John Seitz's fatuous, paunchy husband has a slightly ironic touch, which is all to the good; Marge Redmond's greedy mother and Kristine Nielsen's chatty phone operator are just right, and so is pretty Jodie Markell as the blah heroine. The set, by David Gallo, and the lighting, by Kenneth Posner, are arresting, to say the least, and so are the music and the sound, by John Gromada.

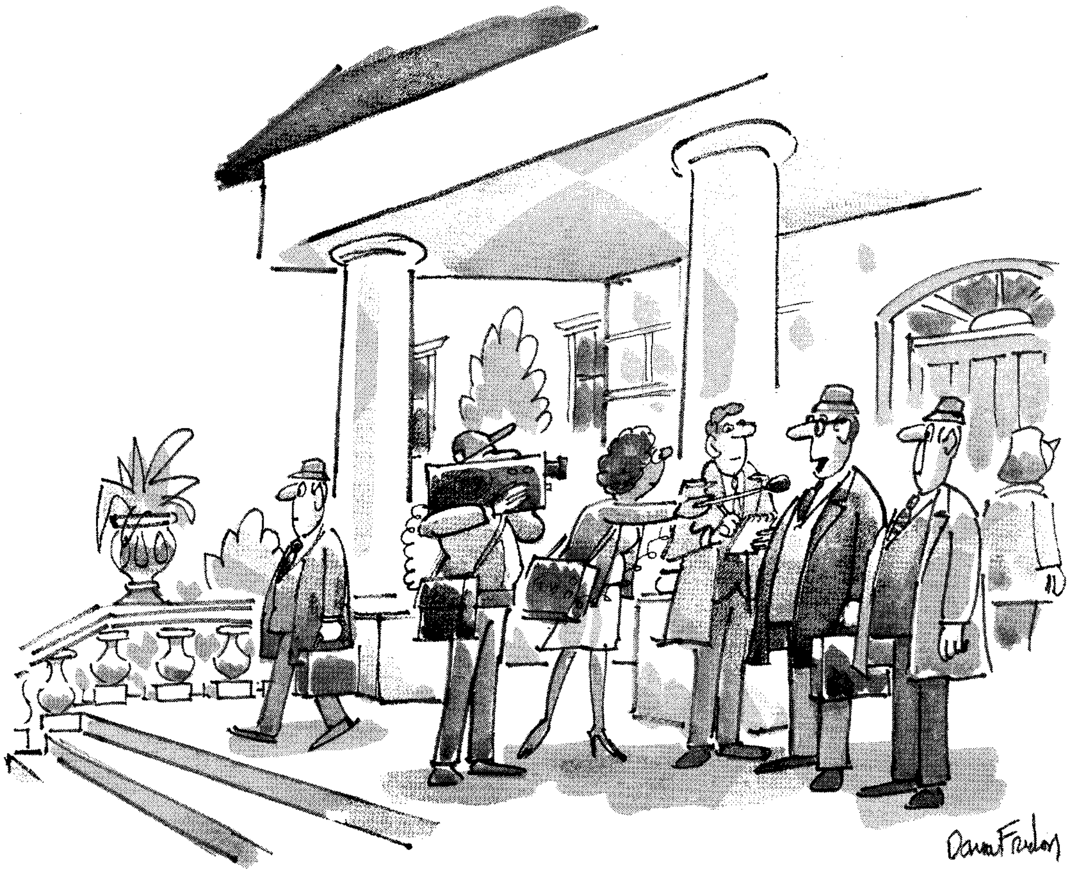
"Machinal," according to a note in the program, is based on the actual case of Ruth Snyder, who, with her lover, Judd Gray, killed her husband and ended up in the electric chair. The original production opened to almost universal critical approval. One holdout, or partial holdout, was Charles Brackett, who reviewed plays for this magazine in the early, pre-Benchley days, and it was on this matter of "victim" that he also balked. "In comparison with Ruth Snyder . . . the young woman in 'Machinal' becomes a nebulous and incredible figure," he wrote. "Whatever her faults Ruth Snyder had fire, and vigor, and a great lust of life. This heroine is a whining neurotic girl full of self-pity and repressions. . . . I should say that she was the kind of girl whose miseries might lead her to develop asthma or hay fever. That she could ever rise to murder I will not admit." He approved of the acting of Zita Johann and Clark Gable, as the young woman and her lover, and of Arthur Hopkins' production. What left him cold was the play.

—EDITH OLIVER

The Mediocre

THERE'S an awful lot of acting going on in the current production of "The Miser," directed by Stephen Porter—hardly any of it good and none of it having much to do with any of the rest. The production, which opened at the plush Circle in the Square on October 11th, is an almost total washout. In Molière's Harpagon, Mr. Porter would seem to have found for the divine Philip Bosco a role he can do nothing with.

There are those who complain that Mr. Bosco has become ubiquitous of late. For my money, there can be no such thing as too much of him. When I was a teen-ager, in the seventies, he was one of the last dignified exponents of the idea of classical acting in New York. Then times changed, and English accents became more fashionable on the New York stage, and an ability to affect them became an asset for an actor. Still, while actors such as Remak Ramsay and Edward Herrmann won praise in roles that Mr. Bosco could well have played, he plodded on



"My client has been convicted by the media, but I am confident that his conviction will be overturned on appeal by the three major networks and the 'Times.'"

largely unnoticed, mostly in productions of Shaw (some of them directed by Mr. Porter) at the Circle in the Square. Recognition came, finally, with "The Devil's Disciple," in which Mr. Bosco's performance as General Burgoyne won him the critical attention he deserved, and with Ken Ludwig's "Lend Me a Tenor," which ran for ages and I hope made Mr. Bosco heaps of money. Unfortunately, the Molière—or Mr. Porter's approach to Molière—isn't much of a showcase for Mr. Bosco's talents.

What was nice about "The Devil's Disciple" and the Ludwig farce was the way they offered Bosco a chance to show us what he'd become good at: bending and shaping his voice so as to express all kinds of irony. Earnestness, to which he'd been relegated in countless roles, had never got him anywhere, but as Burgoyne, a man with a wicked tongue, Bosco came into his own, transcending genre theatre by imbuing a stock figure with idiosyncrasy—which is what Shaw is all about. In "The Miser" we sometimes get earnestness and sometimes get farce (early and late Bosco). Strangely, what we miss is the middle section of his career: the idiosyncratic quality in acting that makes genre specific.

Harpagon is not a man with a wicked tongue; he's just a character in French farce. If one were going to make him interesting and meaningful to a contemporary audience, it would have to be by making what is going on around him interesting and meaningful. And that you would have to do with acting. The current production features fewer actors who are out of their depth than most classical revivals on Broadway do, but the performances—except for those of John Christopher Jones and Adam Redfield as two of Harpagon's servants—are, at best, rough-hewn. With Mr. Bosco's fellow-headliners—Mia Dillon, as Harpagon's daughter, Elise, and Carole Shelley, as the scheming Frosine—it's business as usual. Miss Dillon belts—almost brays—her lines in that queer way she has. Miss Shelley you will think either adorable or a hack. She's funny, briefly, affecting sexual raptures over Harpagon's person, but most of what she does with her face and voice and tongue is pretty unsubtle. Just in case we don't get the idea that Frosine is a low sort of woman, the costume designer (Gail Brassard) has provided Miss Shelley with a red wig and a great deal too much rouge, while Mr. Bosco—whose performance, apart from an expansive coughing fit, seems almost nonexistent—has been got up in baggy stockings and Old Man in French Farce Wig No. 2. It's all so hokey you don't know where to look.

If Mr. Bosco's delivery of a single utterance—"It's nonsense to try to make a dowry out of expenses she won't incur!"—is the only thing I remember laughing at (apart from the coughing fit), that's probably because it was the only time Harpagon seemed like a real person to me. It was the only moment when anyone in the entire production had the aspect of a person with something to say—who's just thought of something, and wants to convince someone else that it is true. For the rest, while Mr. Redfield is good, and Mr. Jones does a brilliant (and sustained) comic turn as Harpagon's honest, clear-sighted coachman-cum-chef, the production is mostly an opportunity to see actors attitudinize. In the role of Valère, the romantic lead, Christian Baskous strikes poses and talks into the air, sometimes affecting that mid-Atlantic accent favored by actors from the provinces or from Juilliard; as Marianne, the object of the affections of both Harpagon, and his son, Tracy Sallows does little more than look good in ringlets and carry an English accent with some reasonable degree of consistency. Thomas Gibson's foppish performance as the son is execrable. The actors deliver their lines in colorful, variegated ways that sound eventful and emasculate their logic (there's no connection between one sentence and the next); they dash about the stage (anything to have something to do); they make fun of long speeches by hurrying them or by forging through to the end without taking a breath (commenting on the text rather than playing a part). And, through it all, how the mind wanders! I spent the second act counting the seats that were empty after the intermission, and left the theatre hoping that people weren't blaming Molière for this tiresome, simpleminded, infantile production.

—MIMI KRAMER

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LETTER FROM LIMA

LIMA is proof that there are no knowable limits to what people will put up with. This desert city was not always noted chiefly for ugliness; throughout the centuries in which the Spanish viceroys of Peru sent thousands of tons of gold and silver to the ravenous mother country, Lima was frequently described as a garden. Squinting, on days when the weather is good, one can almost see the ways in which this place could have been lovely. A few carved wooden balconies still float above the bazaars of downtown Lima. The massive doorways of remaining colonial palaces, now converted to shabby arcades, hint at how cool the silence in their courtyards must have been. These days, though, there is only noise: the cries of money changers and street venders, the howl of traffic, the mighty blast of radio music coming from every store, and, beneath it all, the insistent rumbling of portable electric generators that are switched on during blackouts. Noisy and chaotic, the city cannot even be described as colorful. A persistent fog keeps the sky gray most of the year. Despite the humidity, everything is covered with a thick monochrome coating of dust, for it almost never rains here, and when it does the rain is a polluted drizzle that merely turns the dust to grime. "Lima the Horrible," the poet César Moro called it forty years ago, and that was before the desperate poor had begun their mass flight from the Andes and carpeted the city with their misery, invading the parks and public plazas of the most elegant seaside neighborhoods with anxious offers of cigarettes, Sublime chocolate squares, hand-knit magenta-and-blue striped socks, alkaline batteries, contraband Chilean wine, fake Inca funeral urns, four rolls of toilet paper for the price of one.

It is not only the poor who are concerned with survival; one result of Peru's current economic breakdown is that all Limeños have become obsessed by money—not by wealth or finance or by business deals but by plain cash, the way members of other consumer societies are obsessed by sex. Money sells, and is omnipresent. There are bank advertisements on television and in the press whose central image is not an attractive man or woman but simply a sheaf of dollar bills. Thousands of money changers occupy the city's busiest intersections, tying up traffic as they race from car to car proclaiming their rates. To attract clients, they wave a pocket calculator in one hand and a thick stack of money in the other, and a driver who thinks he has just heard a particularly good price quoted will bring his car screeching to a halt, the way comic-book characters used to do for blond bombshells. In restaurants, when a group of men gather for lunch an eavesdropper will find that the conversation is most frequently about how much the dollar exchange rate with the inti is likely to be next month, and whether a mutual acquaintance has discovered a new way to transfer money abroad. Two women who had obviously met for a long, comfortable lunch conversation at the table next to mine one recent afternoon soon found themselves discussing their electric bills in lengthy detail, and apologized to each other with wry smiles when they realized how they had been spending their time.

Peru has gone broke in a way few societies ever experience—a precipitate impoverishment that makes almost every aspect of daily life here continuously stressful. Many government employees have not received their salaries for weeks now. Members of Congress who want to use the official messenger service must pay for the gasoline for the motorcycles themselves. Lima's largest department stores are no longer open mornings. Traffic lights are missing their colored filters. When you turn on a faucet, you may get water and you may not. Food prices have climbed to the point where people will quote the price of chicken to each other and burst out laughing, but anyone who hoped to save money by buying food in bulk and putting it in a freezer has made a bad investment; blackouts, which are an everyday occurrence here, often last long enough to defrost the most icebound freezer. In any event, most of the population can't afford to buy food in bulk, much less an appliance to put it in: four out of every five Peruvians lack a steady job. According to the government, about eight million Peruvians—more than a third of the population—require emergency food assistance in order to survive.

Devastated by drought and unpredictable weather, ransacked by successive governments, bankrupt and inflation-ridden, Peru is not a place where the impo-

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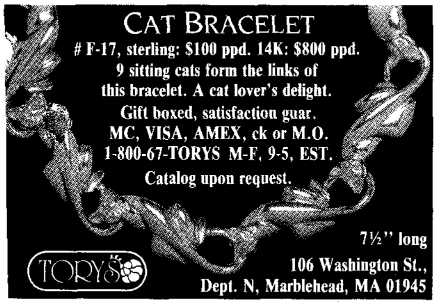

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sition of further economic hardship would have struck most people as a logical course of action. Yet last August 8th, twelve days after being sworn in as President of Peru, Alberto Fujimori did just that, with a *paquetazo*—"violent package"—of economic measures which has left the country reeling. Price subsidies that had been in effect for decades were ripped away overnight. The price of gasoline went from about thirteen cents a gallon to about three dollars and fifty cents. Food prices were allowed to float—thus the funny chicken, and the equally hilarious noodles, which zoomed from about forty cents a pound to more than a dollar. As a result of these measures, inflation, which had averaged an already intolerable 38.4 per cent a month for the preceding seven months, shot up to four hundred per cent for August. Meanwhile, the minimum wage (which most Peruvians, being unemployed, cannot aspire to) was fixed at the equivalent of forty-eight dollars a month. As one columnist wrote, the country had been put on a regimen of "Japanese prices on African incomes."

THERE is no intentional cruelty in the government's program: the *paquetazo* is intended as a tourniquet for Peru's economic hemorrhage, which is the result of four and a half centuries of pillage and reckless mismanagement by all its previous rulers, including the most recent, President Alan García, who tried to expand a receding economy by increasing government spending, without covering the additional expense through higher taxes. He also took on the international banking community by announcing that Peru would not meet its debt-payment obligations. At the end of his term, Peru had been declared ineligible for further international loans, its per-capita gross national product had shrunk by 13.7 per cent, net government reserves were a hundred and forty-two million dollars in the red, and the yearly inflation rate was twenty thousand per cent. Although these are dismal figures, they are by no means unique to Peru. Throughout Latin America, there are similar crises, and, for lack of a better option, variants of the structural economic-reform program that is now stunning Peru have been tried in Bolivia, Venezuela, Argentina, and Brazil. The programs, which are referred to here by the En-

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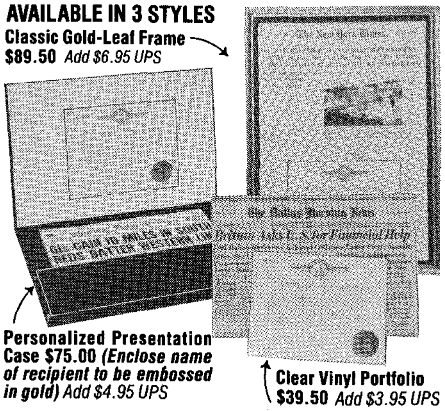

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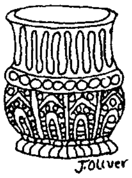
glish word "shocks"—as in electroshock therapy—have been designed and supervised largely by a handful of economists from Harvard, the University of Chicago, and M.I.T. The aim of a shock is to solve inflation by drastically raising prices and thus reducing demand—a simple and natural idea in the United States, perhaps, where crash dieting has become part of a culture that regularly binges. In Peru, the impact and the consequences of a sudden diet are somewhat different.

A woman I will call Amalia Huaycán lives on the other side of the river that separates the main body of Lima from the squalid townships of Rímac, San Juan de Lurigancho, and Canto Grande. I met her in the Lurigancho municipal center—an uncommonly cheerful place, in the shape of a large market courtyard, where the various government offices are set like bustling shops around a central area that boasts real grass, and even a couple of hibiscus bushes. Beyond these grounds Lurigancho consists of bleak miles of dusty paved streets that turn to unpaved roads and finally, as they reach the desert hills that mark Lima's natural limits, to nothing—no network to connect the dust-covered hill shacks made of woven mats where the most recent squatters live. The simple change of environment from such surroundings to the *municipalidad* visibly lifts the spirits of most visitors as they enter, but on the day I met Amalia Huaycán she had remained severely upset. To counter the impact of its economic measures, the government had announced a new Social Emergency Program, known by its Spanish acronym as the PES, which was designed to provide assistance to the 7.6 million people who had been identified as "extremely poor." The new program called for a system of *ollas comunitarias*—community pots, or soup kitchens—to be run by local women with government-supplied ingredients. To start an *olla comunitaria*, however, one needed at the very least a pot, and a group of a dozen or so women who had gathered in the office of the vice-mayor, Ésther Rojas, were complaining loudly that large pots were going for thirty million intis wholesale, or about ninety dollars, and that even for those who already had pots to cook in, and stoves or kerosene burners to cook on, there was nothing to *cook*. The PES was completely disorganized, and no food donations at all had reached Lurigancho since the *paquetazo*.

Señora Amalia's situation was different. For the past six years, she had been administering a *comedor popular*, or people's cafeteria—one of more than a thousand community-based centers in Lima which depended on Caritas and other international charity organizations for donations of nonperishable foods. (The number has swelled to nearly seven thousand since August.) The *comedor's* sixty-odd members supplemented the donated oil and rice, and some other grains, with fish and vegetables that they bought with their own pooled resources. They sold the food they cooked, in a communally owned kitchen, at a price of about seven United States cents a plateful to members and twelve cents to outsiders. This system had not only nourished hundreds of thousands of people each day for several years but also provided the women running it with a forceful sense of self-sufficiency: they might be destitute, but they did not consider themselves beggars, and they were not powerless. Señora Amalia's *comedor* had pots, a large stove, and a working organization, put together with tireless effort over the years, but now she was afraid that her group was about to split apart, with many of the members lured to the government-sponsored soup kitchens by the offer of free food. Besides, the supplies that her *comedor* had been regularly receiving from Caritas in large amounts had dwindled to zero. Following the *paquetazo*, Caritas had been overwhelmed and almost paralyzed by the increased demand for donations: in Lima alone, demand had soared from five hundred thousand to one and a half million rations a day. When I called on Amalia Huaycán at her home, a few days after our first meeting, she was a nervous wreck: the need for the *comedor's* meals was greater than ever, but in its communal kitchen, across the road from her house, I counted eight carrots, twelve onions, half a small pumpkin, and five dozen small fish; with this, the *comedor* was supposed to feed between two hundred and fifty and three hundred people.

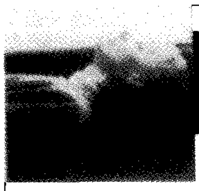
Amalia Huaycán is a Quechua, thirty-eight years old, and she is austerely beautiful, with sorrowful eyes and the

Quechua people's etched features. The only time I saw her smile was when I asked if I might see her petticoats. In authentic Andean style, she wears four of them—two of plain cotton, two of flannel, all trimmed with crude lace—under a gathered felt skirt. Although the rest of her dress is modern and nondescript—a snug knit jacket, thick stockings, and sturdy boots—the effect is traditional. She speaks Spanish imperfectly and with a very strong accent; she says she learned it only six years ago, when she left her home, in the department of Ayacucho, and arrived in Lima as one of many thousands of refugees fleeing the war between the government and the guerrilla organization known as Sendero Luminoso, or Shining Path. Although Shining Path's leaders are not Indian, it professes an Indian mystique, and so found its first mass base of support in the Quechua-speaking native communities of the Andean highlands, where Ayacucho is situated. As a result, the region has taken the brunt of government repression.



Shining Path is a frightening quirk in the annals of guerrilla struggle. It is profoundly isolationist and sectlike. Its leader is a former university professor who calls himself Presidente Gonzalo; that is as if in the United States a messianic movement of fundamentalists armed with guns were led by somebody named President Fred. His followers are guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism, Maoism, and something called Gonzalo Thought—a web of exhortations and formulas so dense that its adherents are reduced to desperate initializing whenever they attempt the simplest report. "The EGP has been reduced to an FP, failing in its relationship between the MS and the power. The FP has been reduced, the FL sidestepped, and the FB contained." So went a recent complaint, confiscated by the police and reproduced in the local press. Typical Shining Path operations include selective assassinations, generally of minor local officials; lightning takeovers of isolated rural enclaves; and mass executions of hostile villagers. Its urban forces are known principally for their skill at dynamiting electric pylons—actions that account for those blackouts not provoked by system breakdowns and shortages. The movement has retained from its early days a remarkable appetite for cruelty, and one consequence of this is that its support appears to have dried up most quickly in areas where it was actually able to establish temporary rule. Some analysts think that Shining Path may already have reached the natural limits of its growth, peaking at around six thousand members, but its core group of supporters remains strong. Indeed, in the struggles between guerrillas and government Señora Amalia did not give an impression of neutrality, much less of sympathy for the official side. By this time, the question of whether she became impenetrably hostile to the government before or after she became a refugee is almost irrelevant: the fact is that at some point she became hostile enough to refuse to vote in the recent Presidential elections, even though refusal to vote is against the law and has deprived her of a validated voting card, the most common form of identification in Peru.

Amalia Huaycán says she lost a brother, a brother-in-law, and a cousin in 1986, during massacres in the nearby Lurigancho prison and in the offshore penitentiary known as El Frontón, when two hundred and eighty inmates who were Shining Path members or suspected sympathizers were killed by military forces following an attempted uprising. By the time that happened, she says, she herself had spent a year and a half in a succession of the country's prison facilities, having been shuttled from rank municipal jails to various federal prisons while the file on her case was lost, reprocessed, and, finally, annulled. "The police landed with guns and helicopters," she told me, recalling her arrest on her Ayacucho farm. " 'Where is your husband?' they said. 'If you don't tell us, we'll kill you and throw you in the river.' We wept, but they were like gods, hitting us and destroying everything." After her release from prison, where her youngest child was born, she came to Lima. "At home, we had corn, beans, sheep, cattle, goats," she said. "Here there was only dust and straw huts. I spoke only Quechua. Little by little—conversing, weeping with the other women, asking 'Why are you here?' and 'Why have you come?'—we discovered that all our stories were alike. We took part in the land invasions"—as squatter activities are called—"and formed our communities here, and the



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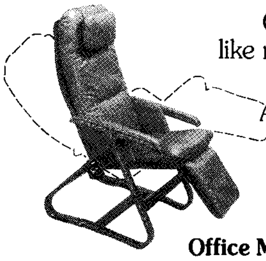

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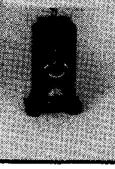

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Not surprisingly, Señora Amalia thinks that the aid cutoff for her *comedor* is politically motivated, and also that it is the result of a long battle of whites against Indians. "That's why society in Peru doesn't progress," she said. "People aren't allowed to work independently. There's always domination. We in the highlands didn't belong to any institution, and so the government began to push us aside. Here in the community, it's the same thing: 'Those people from the mountains, we're going to get rid of them. Those Indians, those *cholos*' "—citified Indians—" 'let's get them out. Limeños are going to be in charge here.' "

Juan José Alva, who is a Limeño, said that the vast majority of some forty thousand people who have settled in this corner of Lurigancho are war refugees, like Amalia Huaycán, but he himself constitutes evidence that in Peru one does not have to be an Indian to be penniless. He is the local director of a government antituberculosis program, and as we talked, in a minute room that serves as the program's medical headquarters and administrative center, he frequently interrupted himself to dispense medicine or advice to one or another of about thirty people under his care, performing his duties so efficiently and knowledgeably that I assumed he was a doctor. He laughed at the suggestion, and said he was a nurses' orderly—and, like everyone around us, a squatter, who in 1984 had been part of a pioneer group of "invaders" of the land where he now lived, with his wife and two children. Following the *paquetazo*, his net income after taxes came to nineteen million intis a month, slightly more than the minimum wage. "That is six hundred and thirty thousand intis a day," he said, and he ticked off some figures. "Ten small bread rolls for breakfast and dinner cost a hundred and fifty thousand. The litre of kerosene we use for cooking is thirty thousand. When the water truck comes by, we fill our tank with two hundred litres of water, and that lasts about four days—that is, seventy-five thousand intis' worth of water a day. That leaves three hundred and seventy-five thousand intis—about eighty cents—for the four of us to prepare three meals a day with. I am poorly nourished, and I am in daily contact with people infected with tuberculosis. My wife can't help out with our income, because she doesn't have a job. She couldn't get one if she tried—there's no work even for professionals, much less for those of us who are nothing."

The suffering imposed by the government on people like Señora Amalia and Juan José Alva may be inevitable, but the point for them, each said, is that when people cast their vote for President Fujimori last June they did so precisely because the other Presidential candidate was proposing a program similar to the one they are now enduring, and, whatever the greater economic logic of such a measure might be, they wanted nothing to do with it.

Alberto Fujimori's unsuccessful opponent happens to have been Mario Vargas Llosa, who, it can be argued, has, through his writing, brought his country more prestige than any other Peruvian, living or dead. When and why Vargas Llosa decided that being President of Peru was a worthier task than producing fine novels is a matter of debate, but from the moment his unofficial candidacy was floated, in 1987, until a month before the elections, there was little doubt here or abroad that he would achieve his goal. The saga of the unravelling of his candidacy, and his spectacular defeat by a complete political novice, is extraordinary, and all the more so because the strength of feeling against the elegant writer and his neoconservative political program might have been foreseen by someone who understands Peru as well as his novels suggest that he does. In fairness to Vargas Llosa, it must be said that even the people who ended up voting en masse against him appeared willing to support him for a while. His unofficial campaign began with a political meeting in September of 1987; Vargas Llosa was one of a group of prominent conservatives who gathered in downtown Lima's Plaza San Martín to denounce Alan García's attempted nationalization of the banking system, but when, dark-eyed and well groomed, he stepped to the microphone to talk about democracy, and how the bank takeover would be the beginning of the end of democracy, it became clear that the event had been only a backdrop for his political début.

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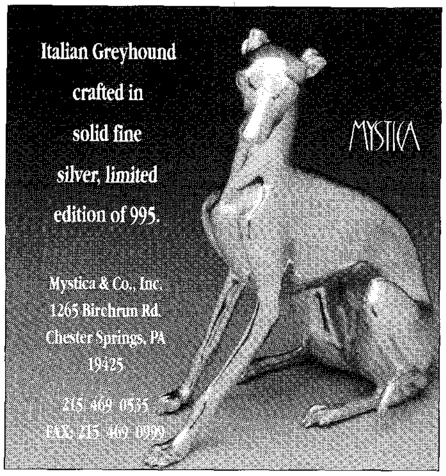

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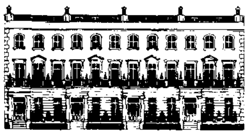

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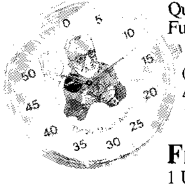

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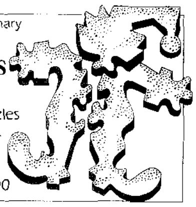

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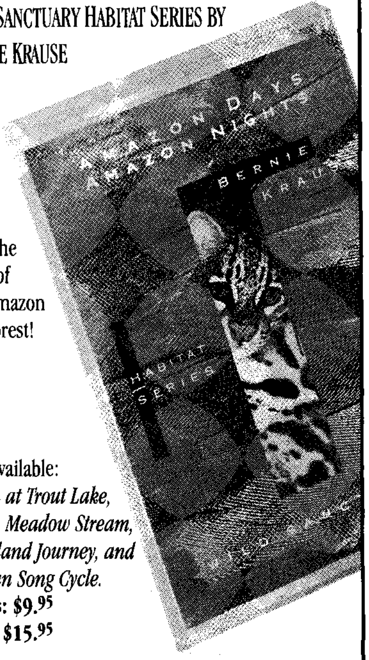
Cynical onlookers found his speech less remarkable than the way his upper-class supporters rented suites in the plaza's Hotel Bolivar so they could observe the event without having to rub shoulders with the *cholos*. Yet once the official campaign got under way, in August of last year, the novelist came out well enough in the polls. After all, there really was no one else. In February, a survey by Datum, a Lima polling firm, showed that Vargas Llosa had a forty-two-per-cent approval rating. Luis Alva Castro, the candidate of APRA, which was the ruling Peruvian party, and had been hurt by the disastrous rule of Alan García, placed twenty-seven points behind him. One leftist candidate, Henry Pease, was having trouble getting his campaign off the ground, and another, Alfonso Barrantes, who had been a highly popular mayor of Lima in the mid-nineteen-eighties, was going down in flames. Potential voters barely registered the existence of a series of lesser candidates—including a self-styled prophet called Ezequiel, and an agronomical engineer of Japanese descent—giving them, lumped together as "others" in the poll results, three per cent of their favor. That was less than eight weeks before the election.

"You know how when you walk into a cloud of mosquitoes you hear nothing but the buzzing?" Hernando de Soto said to me. "That's how I heard the name of the next President in the streets. Everywhere, it was 'Fujimori, Fujimori, Fujimori.' " De Soto, formerly a key adviser to Vargas Llosa and now a key adviser to Alberto Fujimori, has a good ear, and he listens to a sector of society which most people as wealthy and powerful as he pay little attention to: he has made his living and his considerable reputation by studying what he defines as the "informal sector" of the Peruvian economy—that is, the poor who live by their remarkable wits. While Vargas Llosa's ratings were still up in the polls, de Soto said, he sensed a dangerous vacuum in the campaign: "All the parties that had governed this country were burned out, and none of them were in a position to form a coalition." The lower-income voters he studies weren't really convinced by the leading candidate, who started out with an independent image but gradually became identified with the old-money political establishment. "Vargas Llosa simply appropriated a



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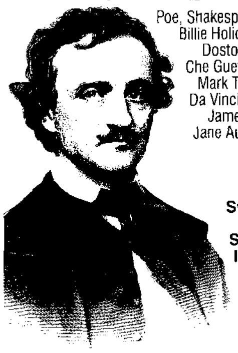

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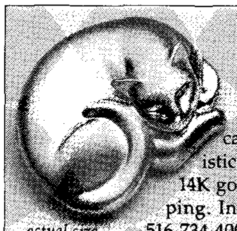

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neoconservative program,” de Soto told me. “And people saw that coming. They felt that he didn’t identify with them, that he was having his picture taken holding hands with the oligarchy.” He went on to recall how startled he was when he realized that a political nonentity—a nisei, or native-born Peruvian of Japanese parents—who didn’t belong to any party and was running a campaign with no funding, was about to fill the void. “Vargas Llosa said he was going to liberalize the economy, impose stern measures, and Fujimori didn’t say anything,” de Soto said. “But people don’t vote according to what they’re told—they vote according to how they feel. People identified with Fujimori.”

Fujimori, a reserved, stern-faced man, is hardly a gifted politician, even compared with the aloof Vargas Llosa. In different circumstances, or in a different country, his campaign might have evaporated swiftly. But Peru is a country marked by racism and class hatred, in which to the great majority of the population the fact that he was an Oriental meant, above all, that he was not white, and was therefore one of them. And, to a large degree, he was. Alberto Fujimori was born fifty-two years ago in a working-class neighborhood in Lima. His parents started out in Peru as shopkeepers. He graduated (with honors) from the Universidad Nacional Agraria in Lima, which is not where the élite study. He then taught at his alma mater, living modestly and apparently harboring no political ambitions, even though he rose to become rector of his university, in 1984, and then, in 1987, thanks to a gift for listening and a talent for reconciling interests, president of the National Assembly of University Presidents. In fact, he did not have Presidential ambitions when he decided to run for President. In late 1988, he had started a movement of professionals and businessmen and academics like him—self-made men who knew that they had something to offer the country and were being kept out of the insiders’ club. The movement, called Cambio ’90 (“Change ’90”), wanted to modernize Peru. The current president of the Senate and First Vice-President of Peru, Máximo San Román, who might be seen as the embodiment of Cambio ’90, told me, “We wanted to put an end to the enormous state bureaucracy and put Congress back in the hands of people with practical experience; to make legislation more flexible; and to modernize the administrative apparatus. We wanted to make the government more responsive to the interests and the potential of small-business men in particular and of the enterprising middle class in general.”

San Román is a bulky, dark-skinned man whose first language was the Quechua of the highlands, and when I met him he looked refreshingly out of place in his ornate Senate rooms, and gleefully astonished at his surroundings. San Román owns a small but very successful factory that uses homegrown technology and recycled machine parts to manufacture industrial equipment for bakeries. In his role as an innovative small-business man, he was introduced to Fujimori in mid-1989. The forthright manufacturer and the reserved academic hit it off, and, one day in October, San Román got a call. “Alberto wanted us to get involved in politics, but I told him that I was a businessman,” San Román recalled. “He said, ‘Max, we can register the movement in the Senate race, and we can put ourselves on the Presidential ballot.’ ‘But who would be the candidate?’ I asked, and he said, ‘Me.’ ‘Fine,’ I told him, but then Alberto said he wanted me to run for the Senate. I turned to my wife and said, ‘Just listen to the crazy thing this man is proposing. He wants to run for the Presidency, and he wants me to be a senator.’ And she said, ‘Oh, that’s a good idea!’ That’s how I got into this.”

Fujimori’s advisers say that between November of last year, when Cambio ’90 put itself on the ballot, and the April elections, when Fujimori and Vargas Llosa got 24.6 and 27.6 per cent of the vote, respectively—results that led to a second electoral round—the Fujimori campaign spent a total of a hundred and twenty thousand dollars. (The novelist’s campaign, which included the pricey services of Sawyer/Miller, a New York-based political-consulting firm, is believed to have cost around ten million dollars.) In the beginning, San Román and Fujimori flew out to the provinces and headed for the markets, where the future President would borrow a stool or a bench to stand on and make his campaign speech. Once, they sat in an airport lobby and watched Vargas Llosa’s huge entourage file by. The Cambio ’90

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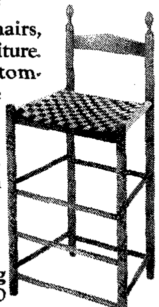

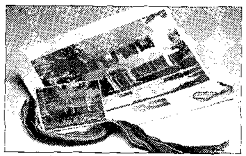

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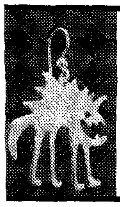

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candidates ate in the marketplaces, but soon they weren't paying for their meals. "The market-stall restaurants gave us free food," San Román recalls. "Then people began bringing us presents—beets, potatoes, carrots." Although at the beginning the candidates made their speeches in narrow streets, because they couldn't fill a plaza, by March the crowds had taken to carrying Alberto Fujimori on their shoulders through the towns. He gave simple speeches, promising to fight corruption and bureaucracy, and spoke in a flat voice that was neither seductive nor artificial. To spread the news of his candidacy, he relied to a great extent on word of mouth provided by Peru's flourishing Evangelical Christian community, with which he had had the vision to establish a political alliance. What little money there was for publicity was spent on radio spots written by a little-known, self-effacing P.R. man named Roberto Morán, who devised a slogan that was pure genius. It was "Alberto Fujimori: Honesty, Technology, and Work": a Peru free of sharklike politicians, a Peru full of computers, a Peru where sweat would be honored and remunerated—in short, a modern, efficient, industrious Peru.

It was a dream to vote for. Peruvians knew their politicians well enough to know that they could be expected to fulfill no dreams, and in that profound cynicism and the need to dream once more lay Fujimori's strength. As his campaign flourished, political analysts made much of the fact that he was gaining ground *despite* the fact that he was a complete unknown. It was the other way around, as the leftist Senator Javier Diez Canseco discovered, with some pain. Diez Canseco, who, as a member of the Izquierda Unida, or United Left, is part of the militant left that has traditionally won over twenty per cent of the vote in all national elections, went campaigning in the city of Arequipa for his reëlection and for his party's Presidential candidate, Henry Pease. His partner on the Izquierda Unida slate was his good friend Hugo Blanco, a peasant organizer from the nineteen-sixties who was running for the Senate for the first time. Blanco had been in Arequipa not three weeks before and had found a warmly receptive audience. Now, as Diez Canseco and Blanco entered the city's market plaza, the battle-worn organizer raised his

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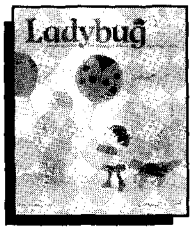

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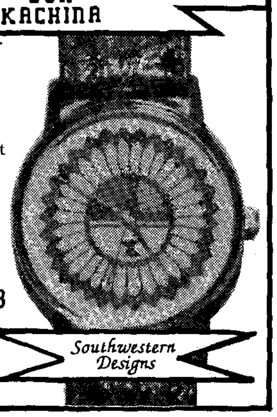

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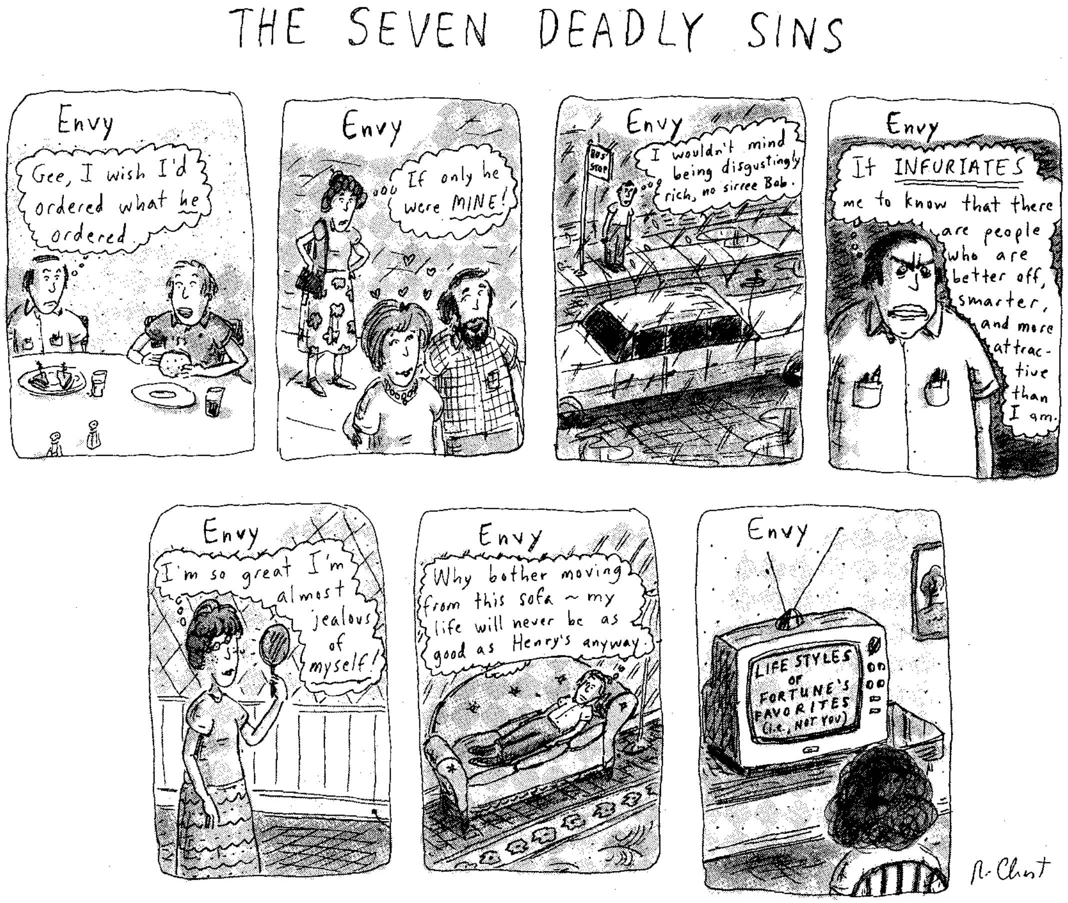
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Envy
Gee, I wish I'd ordered what he ordered.
Envy
If only he were MINE!
Envy
BUS STOP
I wouldn't mind being disgustingly rich, no sirree Bob.
Envy
It INFURIATES me to know that there are people who are better off, smarter, and more attractive than I am.
Envy
I'm so great I'm almost jealous of myself!
Envy
Why bother moving from this sofa ~ my life will never be as good as Henry's anyway.
Envy
LIFE STYLES OF FORTUNE'S FAVORITES (i.e., NOT YOU)
R. Chast

head and sniffed the air. "Brother, something's changed," he told Diez Canseco. The market people gave the two leftists a cool reception. Bewildered, Diez Canseco approached a vender who had a poster of Fujimori tacked up on her stall, and asked, "Señora, why are you voting for him?" The woman looked Diez Canseco in the eye. "Because he hasn't done anything yet."

What a lot of people remember about the press conference held by Mario Vargas Llosa on April 8th, immediately after it became known that the vote counts for him and for Alberto Fujimori were close enough to force a runoff election, is that he answered the first question in French. "He looked so relieved to be doing it, too—as if by speaking French he could get out of Peru at least as long as the question lasted," I was told by a middle-class friend of mine who might have been expected to vote for him. Vargas Llosa must have been intensely relieved two months later to be through at last with the whole painful process, even though it had been his choice to stay in the race rather than admit defeat to Fujimori. He was three points ahead in the first round; in the second, he lost by a humiliating twenty points. "It was like watching someone commit suicide by slitting his wrists rather than by shooting himself," another friend said. During the runoff campaign, Vargas Llosa's supporters in the media and on television carried out a rabidly classist, xenophobic drive against Fujimori. The Catholic hierarchy staged a special procession, headed by the statue of the Lord of the Miracles; society women started prayer chains ("Three Hail Marys so Fujimori doesn't win, pass it on"). And still the novelist went on sinking in the polls. "You'd keep asking, 'Is he dead yet?' " my friend said of the prolonged political agony. "And the answer would be 'No, he's going to another rally.' "

In the end, it was not the novelist but his supporters who lost the election for him. He cannot be faulted for being honest about the recessionary, monetarist program he saw as the only way to drag Peru out of the abyss, and he might even have been forgiven his white turtlenecks and love of French—this was, after all, the café-society Mario everyone already knew. What he was savaged for on Election Day was not knowing how to choose his friends. His friends called his opponent El Chinito—the affectionate diminutive being a favorite recourse of Latin-American racism—and the dark-skinned people who had heard themselves addressed forever as *indios* and little *indios* and *cholos de mierda* liked Fujimori better each time they heard the nickname. (He had the good grace [illegible] use the term himself, shouting "El Chinito has arrived!" on his first campaign tours, when there was nobody to do advance work for him.) For its election-week issue, the news magazine *Caretas* ran a cover that featured Fujimori wearing the *indios'* peaked wool-knit cap with earflaps and holding a llama on a leash, with his campaign slogan—"A President Like You"—punctuated as a question. The intention behind it was vicious, but if the cover had come out a few weeks earlier it could have served as Fujimori's best campaign poster.

"The mathematics of Fujimori's triumph were very simple," his publicist, Roberto Morán, told me. "What are there more of in Peru? Rich people or poor? Indians or Europeans? Limeños or provincials? Ideologues or non-ideologues? There is no mystery to this, but still the other side never figured it out." On Election Night, as Vargas Llosa made a graceful, conciliatory concession speech hysterical upper-class women outside his campaign headquarters shouted for a coup. They embarrassed many of their fellow-conservatives, but they showed an understanding of what an unreconstructed upper class needs in order to stay in power. In the end, Mario Vargas Llosa had been merely an instrument.

"FORTUNATELY, God is Peruvian!" a prominent industrialist exclaimed last month. He is the chairman or a member of the boards of many important industries here, and I had wanted to talk to him because the financial support of men like him had been vital to Vargas Llosa's candidacy.

I wanted to know how the business sector was taking its defeat, but this man turned out to be buoyantly optimistic about the new President, for Fujimori had undergone a full-fledged political conversion shortly before his inauguration. That happened in New York, at the hands of the International Monetary Fund's Michel Camdessus, the World Bank's Barber Conable, the Inter-American Development Bank's Enrique Iglesias, and the United Nations' Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. The ubiquitous Hernando de Soto, scholar of the informal sector and friend of the mighty, helped set up the all-star meeting. Fujimori brought one of his campaign economic advisers to this session, who argued for a gradual approach to inflation, involving price-indexing and a progressive reduction of subsidies. "He was talking about Howdy Doody," and the others talked to Fujimori about the facts of life," a dismissive participant recalled. The President-elect emerged from the meeting convinced that the only feasible approach to Peru's economic recovery—or to renewed I.M.F. and World Bank help, at any rate—involved a monetarist shock treatment. That was at the end of June. The *paquetazo* was delivered o the country in August. By the time I alked to my industrialist acquaintance, a month later, he felt that such an extreme program would never have been accepted by the population at large f it had come from what he called "the palefaces." Like all the other Peruvian businessmen I've talked to since August, he seemed convinced that Fujimori was bringing them the best of oth worlds: the economic program hat the country needed and a palatable olitician who could push it through without getting them lynched. "Right fter the trauma of Vargas Llosa's defeat, we felt as if we'd received a huge low, but now, the way things are urning out, we can see that it's all for he best. Because—let's say that our andidate, elected President, had come ut with an edict that we didn't like. We could have said among ourselves, 'Don't worry, I'll drop in on him tomorrow and discuss it with him,' or 'My wife will arrange to have lunch ext week with Patricia' "—Vargas losa's wife. "But it would all have ad to be very delicate, very restrained, ecause of the respect we feel for him nd because we are so closely identified ith him in the public mind. Whereas

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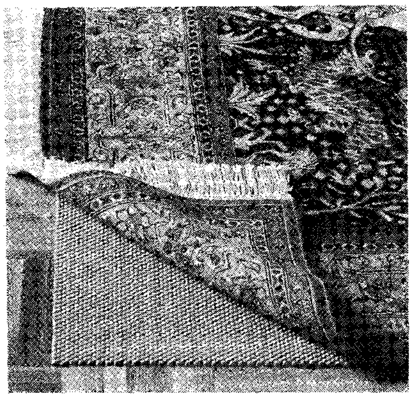
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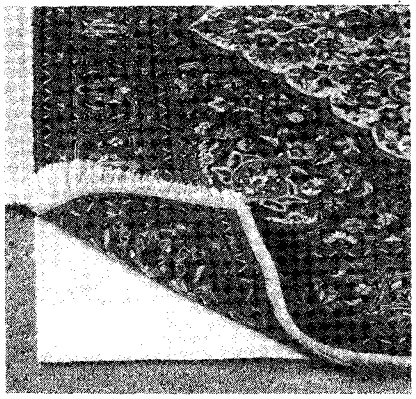
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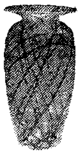

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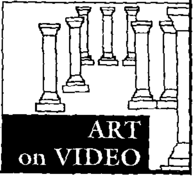

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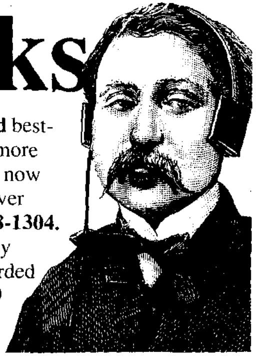

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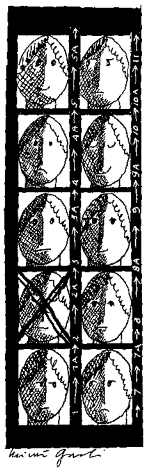
with El Chinito, every time he puts his foot in it we can yell, 'Chinito, don't do that!' And he'll correct himself."

One of the striking things about this business leader's statement was his faith that his community understands what is wrong with the country and knows how to fix it. I thought about that after waking up to yet another day without electricity, getting into a taxi that was a 1966 Volkswagen, buying a bunch of five locally manufactured pens for thirty cents and discovering that none of them worked, walking through San Marcos University, where the average professor earns fifty dollars a month and every inch of wall space is covered with oaths and exhortations by Shining Path and rival guerrilla organizations, and then having lunch at the home of a wealthy and hospitable foreign couple. They were delighted to show me their rambling garden—truly a luxury in this desert city—but a little embarrassed to confess that among the maintenance requirements of a garden here is not only an extravagant amount of water but the time it takes the houseboy to wipe dust off the greenery. In the polished garden, with the barren hills looming just behind, and the money changers and chocolate venders waiting just beyond the guard posts of the residential enclave, and with the houseboy now ducking his head deferentially as he brought out a trayful of drinks, the question was suddenly overwhelming: How much faith did one need to believe that Peru could be fixed?

I asked the industrialist who was so pleased with El Chinito how, once inflation had been stabilized, his sector was planning to get Peru back on its feet, and he said their main hope was foreign investment. ("You'd have to have a riverboat gambler's instincts to invest in Peru," an executive for a transnational corporation had commented to me earlier about that option.) I asked what he thought would happen six months after the initial *paquetazo*, when the Social Emergency Program is scheduled to run out, and he said he could only rely on the Peruvian people's native patience. In answer to those two questions other businessmen sighed and shook their heads, or said things like "We have to hope for the best." They are not economic planners.

Richard Webb, who is one, didn't groan, put his head in his hands, or look to heaven when I asked about the approaching end of the emergency program. "In the first place, that's a poorly put question," he said softly. "There *is* no emergency program, and if we're lucky it will just be starting up six months from now. But what has that got to do with anything?" Webb was the chairman of Peru's Central Bank from 1980 to 1985, during the conservative Presidency of Fernando Belaúnde Terry (who was not much more successful with his economic policies than his successor, Alan García). He now produces *Cuánto*, an extraordinarily clear, didactic monthly publication about economics, and has pulled off the even more astonishing feat of being well spoken of in almost every sector of the Peruvian élite, whatever its political persuasion. He was putting the latest issue of *Cuánto* to press when I interrupted him, but he listened to questions and answered them courteously, chewing on aspirin as he talked. "It's very hard to cut through the declarations and beliefs about economics to see what is really there," he said. "The reason you're asking if foreign investment will come in great amounts is that people tend to believe that the country will sink without it, but, historically, foreign investment has been a very small percentage of the total. We probably won't have very much, but there will be a significant amount in petroleum, and perhaps in mining—if people start to trust Peru again. And it's foolish to speculate about what will happen with the economy in the future until we bring inflation under control. Right now it's stabilized, but if it starts up again things are going to be very, very bad. In order to prevent that, there's two or three years of recession ahead of us, and the government will have to rule with a very hard hand, imposing even more drastic measures than the ones we have now."



Measures more drastic and socially unjust than raising electricity rates by five hundred and twenty per cent?

"What's the point of keeping electricity so cheap that those who have i waste it, while the electric company doesn't make enough profit to expan the service to those who don't have it?" Webb retorted. "You say we can't impose too much hardship, because the guerrillas will benefit, but the fact that there are guerrillas is no excuse for running a country wastefully. On the contrary."

PERHAPS Peruvians will give the shock treatment the time it needs to achieve its desired effects. In that case, three or four years from now Peru will have a stabilized currency and a sound budget. Perhaps the cocaine trade will continue to provide an estimated eight to twelve hundred million dollars in foreign currency a year—an amount that in more normal economic circumstances can contribute greatly to a stable foreign exchange. With any luck, there will be good international prices for Peru's petroleum, copper, silver, and tin, which will allow the country to start rebuilding itself. But it will then be an even poorer nation than it is now, with even more desperate social needs like those which in the past the private sector has never been willing to pay for through higher taxes. At this stage, the only alternative to that grim scenario is continued economic chaos, and President Fujimori, who has no party or nationwide political base to keep his hand firm, is particularly vulnerable to strong-arm lobbying tactics that could make the shock program fall apart. He has already lowered prices of fertilizers and chemicals for this year's planting season (how could the Andean farmers be expected to plant otherwise?), increased the minimum wage by about eight dollars a month, and agreed to make electric bills for August payable in January. (No one knows when the January bills are supposed to be paid.) With the trade sector foundering and small industries going under—a thousand are estimated to have done so thus far—the National Confederation of Merchants is already asking the government to ease up on the shock treatment.

The one sector that might recover slightly in the short run is the middle class, even though it has probably lost more proportionately than any other during the crisis. Juan Buccio, my occasional taxi-driver—he's the owner of the 1966 Beetle—is good at providing clear explanations of this and other economic questions. A silver-haired, fine-boned engineering-school graduate who was never able to find a decent-paying job, he is also the only remaining Vargas Llosa supporter I met. The businessmen I talked to think that now that they've got Vargas Llosa's monetarist program they can do without Vargas Llosa, but Buccio thinks that Fujimori is applying the program mechanically, with no real understanding of its logic and no competent advisers to help him with the fine-tuning. Still, he clings to the hope that the program will have some positive effect. Buccio's car reaches cruising speed at thirty miles per hour, which is a nice speed for ruminating, and whenever he hits a little bump of understanding he chuckles to himself and shakes his head before passing the idea on. "This is what I've just figured out," he said the other morning as we were rolling down the Lima speedway. "There are two bureaucrats in this country who have me to thank for their health and sustenance. What's the minimum wage for bureaucrats? Twenty million intis, or two million per workday. How much gasoline do I put into my car every day? About four million intis' worth. Most of that is taxes, and most of *that* goes to pay for the bureaucracy. So my gasoline is paying for salaries for two of them!"

Ever didactic, he explained that this wasn't just the government's way of stopping inflation by squelching demand but also the most accessible way it has of pouring money into its depleted coffers. After another pensive stretch of driving, he asked me if I thought Peru could be fixed. I told him I couldn't quite understand how, but I was thinking about the eight million people at the bottom, and about an extremely nice, thoughtful businessman who told me apologetically that he wished he could perceive Indians and *cholos* as his equals but that in truth he couldn't help noticing that they stink. "I think things can improve," Buccio said, more focussed on his own situation. "We don't need much. All I need is a stable currency so I know what I can rely on. Then I can take out a loan for another car and have two cars to work. People here have extraordinary initiative; we're always inventing all sorts of little business deals. Without inflation, we'll get by."

And what about the people who voted for Fujimori in the first place? Everyone here is wondering anxiously how much more they can take, and although the historical evidence is that they can take almost anything, the

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question arises because, to a bizarre extent, poor Peruvians today are an unknown quantity—a new composite. They are the new *chicha* culture, the migrants in the shantytowns who have abandoned their native costumes and the flute music of the Andes for bluejeans and harrowingly monotonous songs about sex with a tropical beat. They are the leftist masses who have voted for socialist mayors in any number of urban centers and yet turned their backs on the socialist candidates for the Presidency. They are the "informal sector" whose capacity for hard work and spontaneous forms of capitalist organization Hernando de Soto has charted admiringly—who can rise to the top, like Vice-President Máximo San Román, or, at the bottom, continue peddling rusty car exhausts and disposable razor blades and simply refuse to give up. They are the ones nobody bothered to consult, or even advise, or try to soothe in connection with the drastic economic program they had voted so firmly against. According to Felipe Ortiz de Zevallos, a canny political analyst, "they are pragmatic, oriented to television, somewhat committed to democracy but critical of its formalisms, urgently concerned with their immediate problems, and in need of day-to-day solutions." They are the *cholos de mierda*, and they are the new Peru. With them, all bets are off.

THERE was a demonstration the other day, much like dozens of other demonstrations that have taken place in the center of Lima during the last several months. A few people were kicked or beaten by the police, many more were teargassed, and, in the end, some of the complaints were heard. This particular demonstration was one of the largest so far, and it was organized by the women who administer a community-based food-relief program for children called Vaso de Leche, or Glass of Milk. Like so many other programs for the very poor, it depends on donations from Caritas and had suffered from the agency's sudden overload following the *paquetazo*. In addition, serious tensions had arisen between its administrator, who is appointed by the mayor of Lima, and its president, who is elected from among the women who run the program. The women I met in the municipal offices of San Juan de Lurigancho had told me that all the neighborhood Vaso de Leche participants would be marching together from the *municipalidad* to the center of the city, and had invited me to come along.

On the morning of the demonstration, a half-dozen women met early in the *municipalidad* to prepare their march; by the time I got there, they had finished cutting out a stack of letters made of yellow paper and were about to start gluing them on to a large red banner. The women were all middle-aged housewives, and they readily agreed that a few years ago they would not have been caught dead at a demonstration, or even in the *municipalidad*. "I thought it was wrong to be seen outside my house," a short, lively woman named Matilde Valenzuela told me. "But we needed the help, so I began coöperating with Vaso de Leche. I would ladle out the milk with one hand and cover my face with the other, I was so embarrassed. But I got elected head of my block and then regional coördinator for the settlement, and then general coördinator for our forty settlements. The organization has been so successful that now our men want to get into it, so we're bargaining. We'll let them in if they'll let us into theirs. They don't want that. They're jealous. They say we're hoarding the food for political purposes, and stuff like that. Our own men! But it's just because they know that political organizing around food is important, and that the only thing they do is talk."

The other women were laughing at this story, but I was beginning to feel apprehensive about what lay ahead. Surely they had seen on television what happens to demonstrators? The teargassing? The police ganging up on one person and clubbing him to the ground? Surely they were nervous?

"No way!" a woman with frizzily permed hair said. "We've got demonstration calluses."

"We've got protection," another said, and she slyly pulled the Lurigancho version of a gas mask out of her cardigan pocket: a handkerchief, moistened and wrapped in a bit of plastic. It turned out they had all been getting teargassed for years.

Were the effort and the risk worth it? Could they point to any concrete positive result they had obtained from their previous marches?

"Of course," the frizzy-haired woman said. "After we march, they deliver the milk. If we don't, they

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don't. The last time, they were sending us industrial-grade wheat instead, and we had to go protest to straighten things out."

In any case, another woman said, there probably wouldn't be any problems today. Unusually, the Lima mayoralty had granted the Lurigancho vice-mayor—these leftist women's leftist leader—permission for the march, and she had sent someone downtown to pick up the authorization slip.

When the banner was ready, the group headed for the main road, where a couple of hundred women were waiting between the market stalls and the bus stop, on an open patch of ground separating the four-lane highway from the two- and three-story buildings of downtown Lurigancho. I walked from the back of the crowd to the front, hoping to find Amalia Huaycán, who had told me she would be there. There were many women dressed like her—in wide skirts, with bright-colored hand-loomed shawls around their shoulders—and many dressed like Matilde Valenzuela, in plain cotton shifts and thin sweaters, with wool socks to protect their legs from the cold. As the march began, several women went on with their knitting, and chatted placidly with their neighbors, needles clicking while they walked. I saw the banner being raised, and then I stumbled as the crowd lurched backward in a single reverse motion. Just ahead of us was something I hadn't noticed earlier: two rows of riot police in gas masks, lunging for the front line of demonstrators and wielding billy clubs as they charged. There were screams and a series of short, sharp detonations, and I found myself gagging and blind from tear gas. There was shouting everywhere, and the sound of stampeding feet. The clearing where the demonstrators had gathered was now empty, and the women were regrouping in clusters around the market stalls, whose owners had not so much as bothered to run. Upwind of them, a last annister on the ground spewed a long plume of tear gas. The fumes were sphyxiating, the sight of the masked olicemen terrifying, but the women who were now racing toward the back lleys to dodge past the police blockade nd continue their march downtown were not at all panicky. In fact, they were laughing uproariously.

—ALMA GUILLERMOPRIETO

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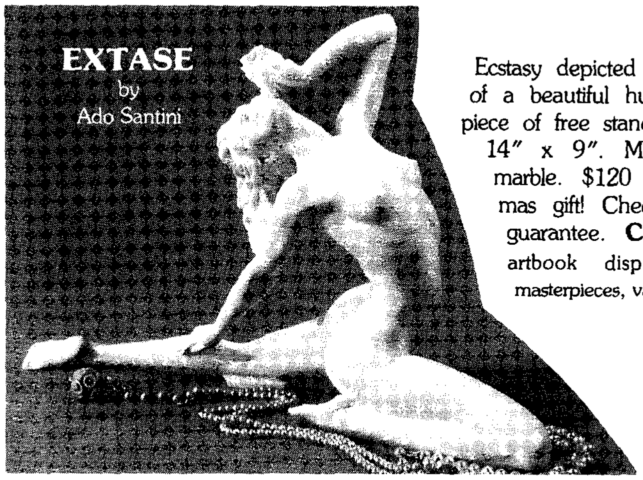

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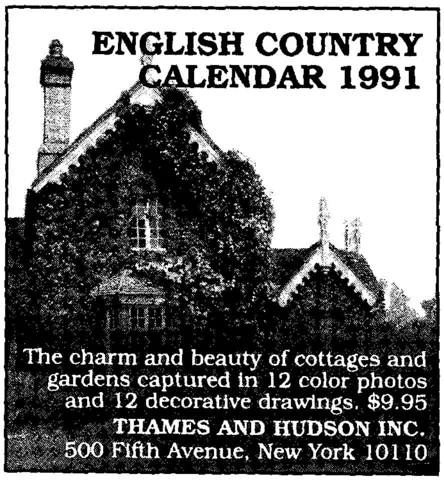

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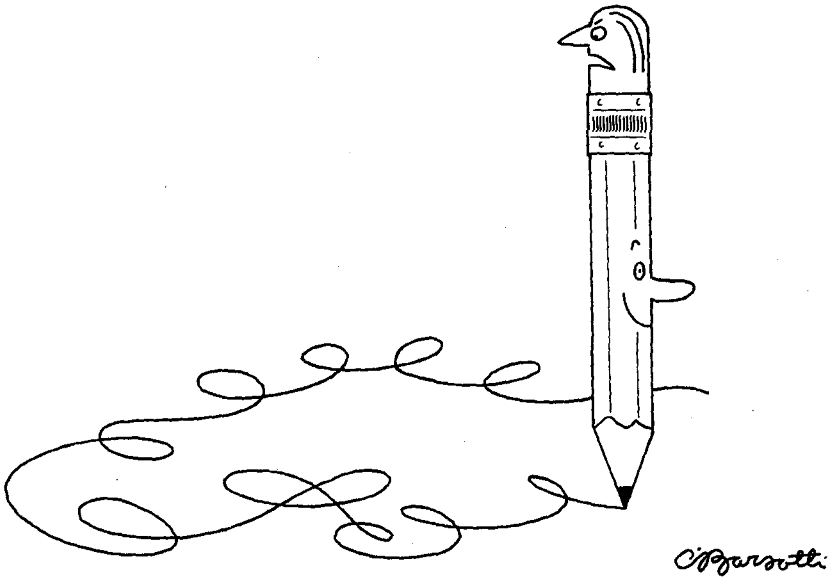
BOOKS

Innisfail

“Biting at the Grave: The Irish Hunger Strikes and the Politics of Despair,” by Padraig O’Malley (Beacon; $22.95), is a social-studies inquiry with the force of tragedy. The author, who was born in Dublin but lives in Boston—he edits *The New England Journal of Public Policy*—scrutinizes the hunger strikes that between May and August of 1981 claimed the lives of ten Irish republican inmates of the Maze/Long Kesh prison, outside Belfast. O’Malley tells us who those young men were, explains their reasons, and recounts the course of the strikes. He also examines the political impasse in Northern Ireland and assesses the strikes’ political legacy. He has interviewed political and religious leaders of all parties and sects, former prisoners, and families, teachers, and friends of the hunger strikers. He writes candidly, conversationally, and impartially, without sentimentality or argot. His book is a heartbreaking scale model of communal conflict.

O’Malley disagrees with the hunger strikers’ politics. He disapproves of the militant Irish republicans’ commitment to violence, not only because it’s violent but because it’s undemocratic, relying on a tiny élite willing to kill or die for goals the majority may not desire. He thinks that the hunger strikers gave their lives in the service of a powerful but irrelevant myth, and that the republicans’ goal—the Irish Republic’s absorption of Northern Ireland, now part of the United Kingdom—isn’t feasible, at least for the rest of the century. He explained why in an earlier book, “The Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today” (1983). The most obvious hindrance is economic. Northern Ireland is a depressed area that draws much of its budget from Westminster, and the Irish Republic, with its own economic woes, can’t afford a six-county rust belt. Even after completing “The Uncivil Wars,” O’Malley found that the hunger strikes continued to haunt him, and drew him back to Ireland. They seemed “a metaphor for the entrapment of the larger society,” in which both Protestants and Catholics, ensnared by their habits of mistrust and confrontation, see themselves as helpless victims.

O’Malley assumes that his readers are familiar with modern Irish history, and only sketches in the background, starting with the nineteen-sixties, when the hunger strikers were growing up. It was then that Ulster’s Catholic minority—about a third of the population—began to agitate for civil rights Catholics had been denied by gerrymandering and other informal but effective systems of discrimination ever since partition. O’Malley says that the Protestant majority regarded the Catholics as subversives—a republican fifth column—and reacted to their demonstrations so violently that in 1969 the British government sent over troops to protect the Catholics. However, the I.R.A. chose to regard the soldiers as invaders and occupiers rather than defenders, and attacked them in a ferocious campaign, which begot further ferocity. O’Malley calculates that Catholic and Protestant paramilitary groups and British soldiers combined to inflict death or injury upon one household out of twenty. In 1972, the British government abolished the North of Ireland Parliament, responsible for domestic affairs, and began a period of direct rule that still continues. The British changed some judicial procedures and penal practices, and it was these changes which led to the hunger strikes.



“And I suppose cleaning up after yourself just once would in some way stifle your precious creativity.”

Under Northern Ireland’s Special Powers Act, the police had interned suspected terrorists without trial, treating them very much like prisoners of war. They were segregated by allegiance—republican or loyalist—but they organized their own pastimes, wore their own clothes, and lived in Nissen huts at Long Kesh, a former airbase near the village of Maze. In 1973, the British introduced new courts to try suspected terrorists. The British also built a new prison at Maze and announced that terrorists convicted after March 1, 1976, would be treated like all other convicts. The political prisoners in Maze refused to accept their demotion from idealists to ordinary felons, and began to protest for special status by wrapping themselves in their blankets rather than agree to wear prison uniforms. (Protestant political prisoners abandoned the protest when it became a Catholic and republican cause.)

The struggle escalated into a battle of excrement—“the dirty protest”—after the prisoners refused to wear uniforms on the way to the toilets and were denied slop buckets in their cells. The prisoners made the prison all but unlivable; during one winter, they broke the windows in their cells to air out the smell of disinfectant. I.R.A. gunmen shot eighteen prison officers. The British still refused to grant the

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Maze republicans prisoner-of-war status. Hunger striking was their last weapon.

Hunger striking, a form of passive resistance used by the weak against the strong in pre-Christian Ireland, was assimilated into the Christian tradition as fasting. (During one sixth-century church-state conflict, an Irish king and a group of monks fasted against each other.) In modern Ireland, O'Malley tells us, hunger strikes have often failed. The Irish Republic has allowed hunger strikers to die without offending public opinion anywhere or arousing much protest. The first hunger strike at Maze, which was undertaken in 1980 by seven prisoners and lasted from October 27th to December 18th, was ended by a misunderstanding: the prisoners thought that acceptable terms were on the way, but, O'Malley says, they were seen to have backed down. Bobby Sands, who had not been a striker but was the prisoners' Officer Commanding during the strike, blamed himself, and resolved to start a new strike on March 1, 1981. Sands and Brendan McFarlane, who would become the O.C. when Sands went on strike, planned that Sands would lead off alone, to be followed in a few weeks by one or two more volunteers, who, in turn, would be followed by another little group, and so on, in order that (in the worst case) a succession of deaths would keep pressure on the British government. Prisoners O'Malley has interviewed remember that Sands expected to die but that other hunger strikers were more optimistic.

There was little public interest in the strike until Sands was elected to Parliament, after the unexpected death of the member for Fermanagh-South Tyrone. An M.P. on a hunger strike caught the world's attention, and the prisoners were confident that Mrs. Thatcher would not allow Sands to starve himself to death amid global publicity. He died on May 5th.

In July, a secret emissary, thought to be from the Foreign Office, made contact with the I.R.A. We don't know who he was, because none of the British officials O'Malley interviewed had ever heard of him. The terms that the mystery man had to offer were the ones the British had offered all along; namely, that they would consider specific demands, such as allowing political prisoners to wear their own clothes, but

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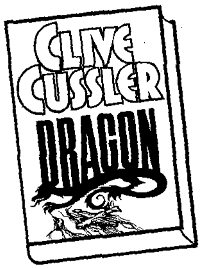

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only after the hunger strike ended. The strike began to disintegrate on July 31st, after one of the strikers, Paddy Quinn, lapsed into a coma, and his mother exercised her right as next of kin and had him taken to a hospital. Other families followed her example.

When the prisoners and the I.R.A. leadership recall their calculations, they sound dense in their inability to see that the British, too, had principles. Fanatics don't understand any righteousness but their own. Unfortunately, Mrs. Thatcher's arrogance made it hard for the strikers to understand that the British public would never endow with moral legitimacy men they thought of as assassins. Yet the emotional turmoil in the prison seems pitiable, especially in contrast with British immobility.

O'Malley's portrait of McFarlane shows a good-natured man hardening under stress: insisting after every setback that another death would compel the British to back down, sending away a Red Cross delegation that tried to intervene, and helping the I.R.A. sabotage the negotiating efforts of a delegation from the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace—quasi-governmental emissaries from the Republic. The hunger strikers' families grew bewildered. Some feared that they were being used by the I.R.A. Some were torn because, though they had promised not to intervene, they had never really believed that their sons' or husbands' lives would be at risk. Their recollections of affectionate small talk during their visits suggest that the strikers tried to feign normality, but with the approach of death they seemed to move into a world of their own, bound only to each other by a concept of honor at once noble and archaic. O'Malley's brief biographies of these martyrs show us that violent nationalism was the only opportunity their society offered the hunger strikers to transform or transcend their ordinariness. One of O'Malley's most telling witnesses—Pat McGeown, a hunger striker who survived because his wife had him hospitalized when he became comatose—recalls a conversation with Micky Devine, the last striker to die, a week before his death. Devine told McGeown that he thought the strikes should be ended, but refused to end his, because he didn't want to seem concerned about saving his own life. McGeown himself embodies the strikers' gallantry—or quixotism. From the first, he had been critical of Sands' and McFarlane's plans, and after Sands died he argued for ending the strike. Yet when the strike looked as if it were about to fail he volunteered to join it.

O'Malley deepens our sadness by reminding us that these deaths only further polarized the two communities of Northern Ireland. His interviews record two separate choruses making totally divergent comments on the action. All during the strike, atrocities and accusations of atrocity continued: nobody in Northern Ireland felt free to grieve impartially. Protestants who counted up their dead saw Catholic support for the hunger strikers as proof that Catholics supported murder. As Orwell summed it up in his essay "Notes on Nationalism," "Loyalty is involved, so pity ceases to function." O'Malley quotes an essay by the historian Frank Wright explaining the psychological machinery that permits terrorists to usurp leadership:

> When people live in the shade of violence, they also live in fear of the worst things said and done in their name, because they know they are in danger of being held responsible for them by the other side. It becomes difficult to repudiate "our" confrontationalists when the same people may be "our" defender against whatever they provoke.

O'Malley doesn't deliberately lacerate our feelings. The facts do. The combination of his particulars with the generalizations of the psychologists, historians, and philosophers whose reflections he has explored helps us understand this intractable quarrel, and all those other quarrels in which groups who identify themselves by race, ethnicity, language, religion—but above all by their conviction that they are victims—justify their cruelty by appealing to "memories of past injustice and humiliation." O'Malley's story of two English-speaking communities who squandered the benefits of constitutional government is frightening, for his theme—the destructive effects of feelings of beleaguerment, entrapment, and victimization—is echoed in every morning's newspaper.

—NAOMI BLIVEN

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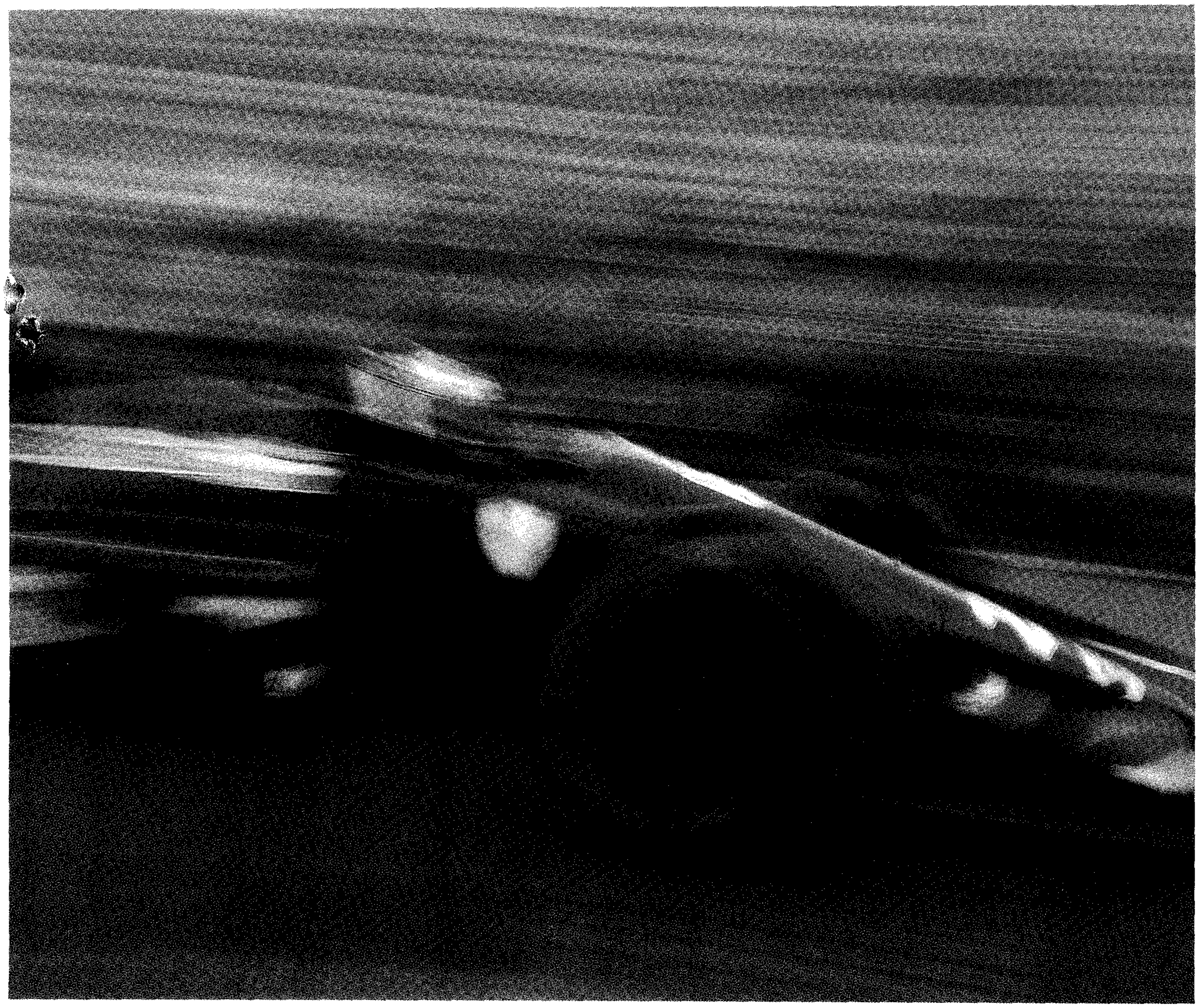

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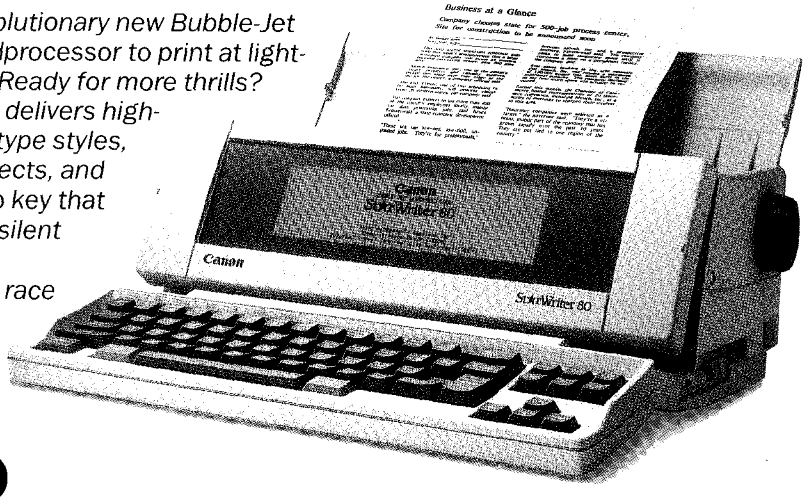

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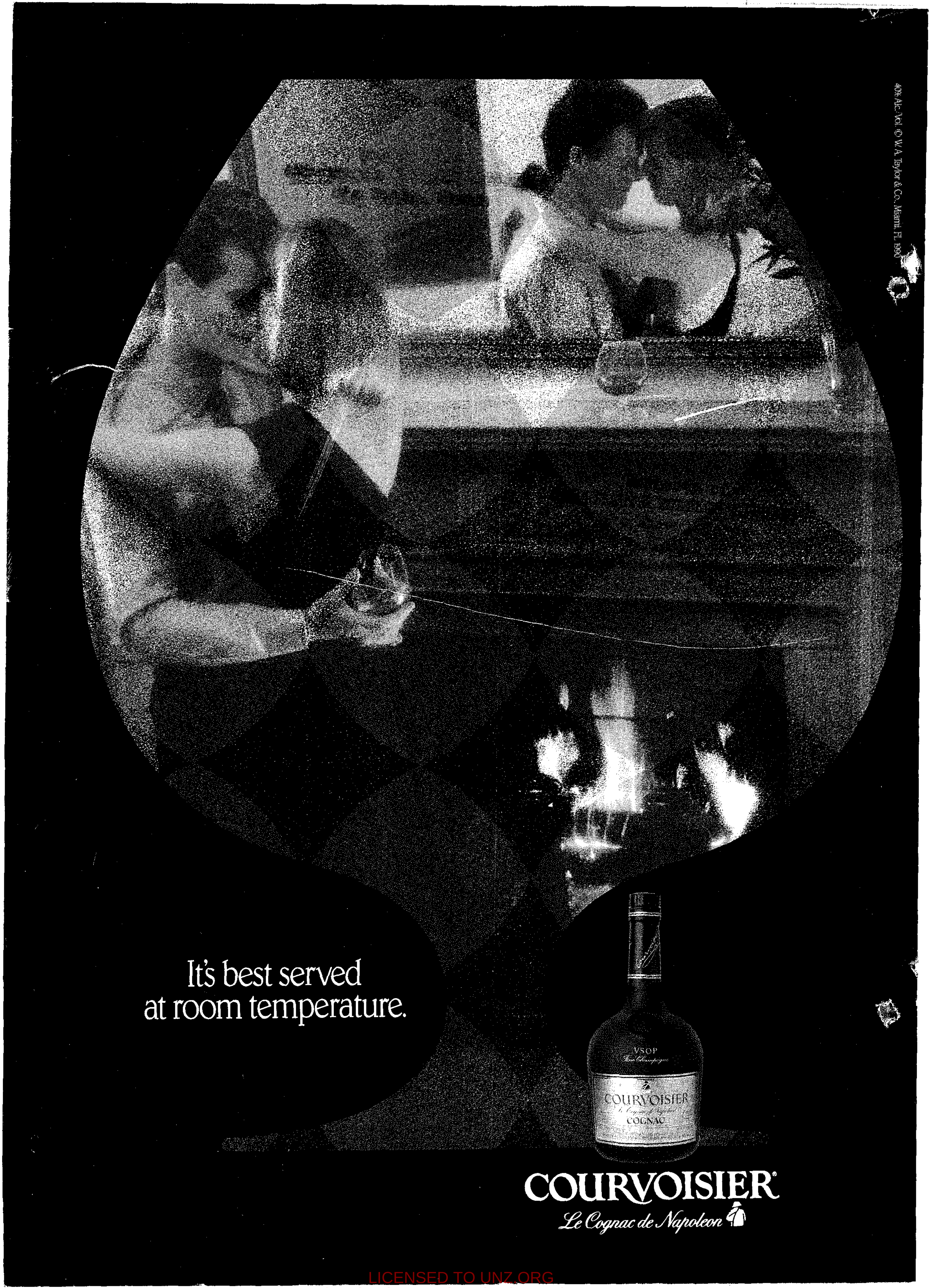
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